Daily Report

East Asia

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FBIS-EAS-96-101 *23 May 1996*

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Japan

Japan: Defense Cooperation With U.S. May Go Beyond Far East

OW2305115296 Tokyo YOMIURI SHIMBUN in Japanese 18 May 96 Morning Edition p 1

[FBIS Translated Text] Along with the planned review of "the Japan-U.S. defense cooperation guideline," the government on 17 May firmed up an intention to replace "Far East emergencies" in the guideline with "emergencies in Japan's neighboring regions."

The existing guideline stipulates defense cooperation between the Self-Defense Forces [SDF] and the U.S. forces in case of Far East emergencies. The change would make it possible for both Japan and the United States to examine joint military measures so that the SDF can provide logistic support to the U.S. forces not only in a Korean peninsula crisis and a China-Taiwan dispute, but also in a military conflict in the Spratly Islands, pirate activities in sea lanes, and a possible outbreak of "the second Persian Gulf war." The government intends to sound out a U.S. reaction about the change soon.

The change is based on a clause on the goals of Japan-U.S. cooperation incorporated in the New National Defense Program Outline and the Japan-U.S. joint defense declaration: "To promote cooperation between Japan and the United States aimed at possible emergencies in Japan's neighboring regions."

Although saying, "we cannot specify the extent of the regions," the government considers that the regions go beyond the Far East stipulated in the Japan-U.S. security treaty.

Specifically, the government source said that "the region includes the Middle East, the Malacca Strait and the Spratly Islands, where a crisis could pose a serious threat to Japan."

When the Persian Gulf war took place in 1991, the Japanese Government discussed measures to support the multinational forces. However, it only dispatched SDF mine sweepers after the war ended. To expand the range of bilateral defense cooperation will improve Japan's system to provide logistic support to the U.S. forces in wartime.

As for a specific measure of cooperation, the government considers having the SDF assigned to transport and keep the U.S. forces' provisions scheduled to be sent to disputed regions while they are in Japan for transit. Providing medical treatment to injured U.S. servicemen in Japan is another plan being studied.

Commenting on the issue, a high-ranking official at the Defense Agency said, "As for regions other than the Far East, bilateral diplomatic cooperation — rather than military cooperation — will be further emphasized. However, this is provided for in the security treaty."

The current guideline, implemented during the Cold War era, stipulates the sharing of military duties between the SDF and the U.S. forces to prevent foreign invasions and to counter a military threat to Japan as well as a crisis elsewhere in the Far East. It lacks the specific measures to deal with Far East emergencies since its focus was on the handling of crises in Japan — the invasion of the Soviet Union for example.

Besides this change, the review will also include cooperation between the SDF and the U.S. forces in UN peacekeeing operations (PKO), improvement of defense equipment and technological exchanges, and contribution to the multilateral security dialogues.

Japan and the United States will hold a working group meeting on security in Hawaii on 27, 28 May to begin the guideline's reexamination. To conduct a full-scale review, the two countries are scheduled to decide the establishment of "the defense cooperation committee" (tentative) comprised of foreign and defense bureau chiefs from the two countries, the Joint Staff Council chairman, and the commander of the U.S. forces stationed in Japan.

Japan: LDP Official Says Security Pact 'Boosting' U.S. Commitment

OW2305082796 Tokyo KYODO in English 1617 GMT 23 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tokyo, May 23 KYODO — Last month's Japan-U.S. declaration "reaffirming" their security alliance is partly aimed at boosting American commitment to the Asia-Pacific region, the policy panel chief of the dominant ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) said Thursday [23 May].

The April 17 statement in Tokyo by Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto and U.S. President Bill Clinton calls for a bilateral alliance for peace in the Asia-Pacific region, LDP Policy Affairs Research Council Chairman Taku Yamasaki said in a lecture sponsored by KYODO News.

The U.S. economy wants to make a positive commitment to the fast-growing Asia-Pacific region, but does not want to provide free-ride security for it, he said.

Japan cannot cooperate with Asia militarily under the Japanese war-renouncing Constitution and due to Asian nations' lack of trust stemming from Japan's wartime deeds, the senior LDP official said.

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Because of this, to fulfill its obligation as a partner in the region, Japan should contribute by boosting its technology and transferring it to the Asia-Pacific region, he said.

The bilateral declaration also aims at dealing with possible emergencies in the Far East such as in the Korean Peninsula and the Taiwan Strait, he said, adding the food-shortage in North Korea may lead to an emergency situation there.

He reiterated the LDP's stance that party members cannot meet a North Korean delegation visiting Japan around next Monday at the invitation of the coalition partner Social Democratic Party unless a proposed four-way meeting of North and South Korea, China and the United States to promote peace on the peninsula materializes.

Japan: No 'Immediate Action' Expected Over Defection of DPRK Pilot

OW2305091096 Tokyo KYODO in English 1743 GMT 23 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tokyo, May 23 KYODO — North Korea will not take immediate action over Thursday's [23 May] defection of a North Korean air force pilot to South Korea in a MiG-19 fighter, the top government spokesman said Thursday [23 May].

There has been no overreaction in either North or South Korea in connection with the defection, Chief Cabinet Secretary Seiroku Kajiyama told reporters.

Gen. Shigeru Sugiyama, chairman of the Joint Staff Council of the Self-Defense Forces, told reporters the SDF has taken measures to strengthen intelligence-gathering functions following the incident.

Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto said any Japanese Government action on the issue would come after it gets information from the South Korean government.

It is likely to take at least two or three days until the defector's motives and other details become clear, he told reporters.

Japan: Hashimoto Disapproves of Upcoming DPRK Delegation Visit

OW2305113196 Tokyo NIHON KEIZAI SHIMBUN in Japanese 22 May 96 Morning Edition p 2

[FBIS Translated Text] The schedule for a delegation of the Workers' Party of Korea [WPK] of the DPRK (North Korea) visiting Japan from 27 May has been finalized. The WPK gave its reply to the Social Democratic Party [SDP] on 21 May.

The delegation will be led by Yi Chong-hyok, vice chairman of the Korean Asia-Pacific Peace Committee, who is known to be a close associate of WPK secretary Kim Yong-sun, and is expected to spend one week in Japan. However, the government, the Liberal Democratic Party [LDP], and New Party Sakigake are reluctant to meet the delegation unless there are prospects for the four-way talks among North Korea, the United States, the ROK and China to materialize. Problems are still expected to arise before the visit actually takes place.

SDP Secretary General Kanju Sato reported the DPRK delegation's visit from 27 May at a meeting on the evening of 21 May with Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto, and the secretaries general of the three ruling parties. Sato also stated that: 1) the purpose of the visit is to lay the groundwork for the resumption of normalization negotiations between Japan and the DPRK; 2) [the SDP] will call on North Korea to participate in the quadrilateral talks; 3) the ROK has been briefed on the purpose of inviting the delegation, and has shown a certain measure of understanding. He then sought the understanding of the participants in the meeting.

In response, Hashimoto expressed his misgivings: "The ROK is very sensitive about this. The government's position is that promotion of the four-way talks and the north-south dialogue is a prerequisite. I cannot approve of this visit."

Japan: Tokyo, Ottawa Agree To Support 4-Way Korea Peace Talks

OW2305095496 Tokyo KYODO in English 0918 GMT 23 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tokyo, May 23 KYODO — The defense ministers of Japan and Canada agreed Thursday [23 May] to work for the realization of proposed four-way talks for a new peace arrangement on the Korean Peninsula, Defense Agency officials said.

Defense Agency chief Hideo Usui told Canadian National Defense Minister David Collenette that the greatest security concerns are North Korea and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

He said he hopes that North Korea, which has not yet given its final verdict on the proposed peace talk formula, will accept the idea, aired by the presidents of South Korea and the United States last month.

The talks would group North and South Korea, China and the United States.

Collenette requested Japanese cooperation in the exchange of defense technology. Usui, while explaining

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that Japan does not export weapons, said such exchanges would be considered on the working level.

Usui also expressed Japan's gratitude for Canadian support for a Japanese peacekeeping contingent serving in the U.N. Disengagement Observer Force on the Israel-occupied Golan Heights. The Japanese troops have taken over the tasks of a withdrawing Canadian logistics contingent.

The two defense minsters also agreed to continue to cooperate in the ASEAN Regional Forum, a regional grouping for multilateral security dialogue under the leadership of the Association for Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

Japan: Russian Communist Party Legislator Discusses Bilateral Ties

OW2305103396 Tokyo KYODO in English 0953 GMT 23 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tokyo, May 23 KYODO — Russia will seek to improve ties with Japan through the resolution of a long-standing bilateral territorial dispute if the country's Communist Party leader Gennadiy Zyuganov is elected president in the June 16 elections, a Russian Communist Party legislator said Thursday [23 May].

Zyuganov, chairman of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Russian Federation, will consider relations with Japan in line with the 1993 Tokyo Declaration calling for an early solution to the row based on "principles of law and justice," Nicholay Savelyev told KYODO News in an interview.

The remark signals a shift in the Russian Communist Party chief's stance on the quarrel over four Russian-occupied islands off Japan's northernmost main island of Hokkaido.

Zyuganov has so far given a negative view on the resolution of the row that has barred the two countries from concluding a formal peace treaty.

The Tokyo Declaration was issued when President Boris Yeltsin visited Japan in October 1993 for a summit with then Prime Minister Morihiro Hosokawa.

The Zyuganov government will honor all treaties and arrangements concluded with other countries under previous administrations if the Communist Party leader wrests power from Yeltsin in the coming presidential election, Savelyev said.

The Russian presidential election is seen as a close two-horse race between Yeltsin and Zyuganov, with attention focused on whether the Communist Party will return to power for the first time since the collapse of the former Soviet Union in December 1991.

Savelyev is a Communist Party member in Russia's State Duma or lower house of parliament. He is also an adviser to Zyuganov on economic policies.

He suggested that expansion of economic relations between Japan and Russia will contribute to eventually solving the territorial quarrel.

"Many political problems can be solved easily once economic factors are also taken into account," he noted.

Savelyev also brushed aside speculation that Russia's economic ties with major industrialized countries will deteriorate under the communist regime, saying the Zyuganov administration will not review Russia's debts to other countries.

Japan: MOF To Require Banks' In-House Inspection Annually

OW2205152396 Tokyo KYODO in English 1359 GMT 22 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tokyo, May 22 KYODO — The Finance Ministry will require annual in-house inspections of financial institutions, starting in the spring of 1998, to improve their business foundations, ministry sources said Wednesday [22 May].

According to ministry plans, the sources said, banks and other institutions engaged in trading on the market will be required in principle to inspect their own business operations both in Japan and overseas once every year.

The results of the inspections will be checked by certified public accountants before being submitted to the ministry, they said.

Local finance bureaus will be entrusted with inspections of regional banks with healthy business performances, the sources said.

Inspections are now conducted separately by the Finance Ministry and local finance bureaus.

Ratings will be assigned to banks depending on the outcome of the investigations, and companies with low ratings will be required to undergo annual inspections by the ministry, the sources said.

The results of the investigations may be disclosed, they said.

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Japan: Coalition Panel To Introduce MOF Reform Plan Early Jun

OW2305070696 Tokyo KYODO in English 0618 GMT 22 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tokyo, May 22 KYODO — A task force of the three ruling coalition parties is planning to introduce a draft by early June for reform in the Ministry of Finance [MOF], Shigeru Ito, the head of the task force said Wednesday [22 May].

Ito, who is also a senior member of the Social Democratic Party, said at a meeting with the Federation of Economic Organizations (Keidanren) that the task force will draw up the plan by next week.

The reform plan is likely to call for the Finance Ministry to retain its role of collecting taxes and writing annual government budgets, but for financial administration to be transferred to a new independent body that will be in charge of inspection and supervision, Ito said.

A working group of the task force convened Wednesday to discuss the system for inspection and supervision of financial institutions, and also exchanged views concerning the revision of the Bank of Japan Law.

North Korea

DPRK: Radio on Infiltration of ROK 'Combat Vessels'

SK2305084896 Pyongyang Korean Central Broadcasting Network in Korean 0158 GMT 23 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] This is just in. The South Korean puppets perpetrated a grave military provocation of infiltrating [chimip] a group of combat vessels [chongtu hamson chiptan] deep into our country's territorial waters in the West Sea [Yellow Sea].

Today, the South Korean puppets perpetrated a grave military provocation of illegally infiltrating a group of combat vessels deep into our country's territorial waters in the West Sea.

At around 0540 [2040 GMT on 22 May] this morning, the puppets infiltrated eight combat vessels, which consisted of destroyers, patrol boats, and speedboats, deep into the territorial waters, east, west and south of Tungsan-got, the Kangnyong Peninsula, South Hwanghae Province, for the purpose of committing the premeditated act of hostilities against us.

The naval patrol boats of the Korean People's Army, which were defending the sea of our socialist fatherland with vigilance, were urgently dispatched to the scene. As the patrol boats advanced to the scene, the rascals, who failed to realize their wicked intentions, ran away to the South side in a flurry.

The recent sea intrusion incident did not develop into armed conflicts between the two sides entirely because the marines of our People's Army highly displayed patience and self-control.

The recent sea intrusion incident coincided with the puppets' complete abrogation of the Armistice Agreement and their daily perpetration of military provocations against us on the land, and sea and in the sky. Because of this, we cannot but take serious note of this incident.

The intrusion incident of the puppet Army's group of combat vessels is the rascals' deliberate and premeditated provocative maneuver to artificially aggravate confrontation and tensions between the North and South.

The South Korean puppets should seriously deliberate on the evil effects that will be brought upon themselves by the reckless military provocation and should not act rashly.

DPRK: South Korean Warships Infiltrate Territorial Waters

SK2305092396 Pyongyang KCNA in English 0443 GMT 23 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Pyongyang, May 23 (KCNA) — The South Korean puppets today illegally infiltrated warships deep into the western territorial waters of the North.

At around 05:40, they infiltrated eight vessels including a destroyer, patrol boats and clippers deep into the waters west, east and south of Tungsan-got of Kangnyong Peninsula, South Hwanghae Province, for the purpose of committing a premeditated hostile act against the North.

When a patrol craft of the Navy of the Korean People's Army [KPA] which was on routine duty sailed out, the vessels fled southward hurriedly, finding it impossible to attain their ulterior purpose.

It was thanks to the patience and self-restraint of the KPA seamen that the incident did not lead to an armed conflict between the two sides.

We take it very seriously that the incident occurred when the enemy has been destroying the Armistice Agreement and committing military provocations against the North on the ground and sea and in the air.

The infiltration of the warships is a deliberate premeditated provocation aimed at intentionally aggravating inter-Korean confrontation and tension.

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The South Korean puppets must stop running wild, pondering over the grave consequences to be entailed by their reckless military provocations.

DPRK: NODONG SINMUN Reacts to ROK Allegations on DMZ Intrusions

SK2305040096 Pyongyang KCNA in English 0339 GMT 23 May 96

["Preposterous Charge Against the North" — KCNA headline]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Pyongyang, May 23 (KCNA) — The South Korean puppets have recently alleged that soldiers of the Korean People's Army "broke into" the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) south of the Military Demarcation Line (MDL) and "fired guns."

Commenting on the fact, NODONG SINMUN today says the puppets are in the habit of committing provocations against the North and blaming the North for them.

It is none other than the South Korean puppets that seek a war in the Korean peninsula, the daily says, and continues:

They have deployed huge Armed Forces in forward areas near MDL and issued a higher special alert order to all the puppet army and turned DMZ south of MDL into a heavily armed area and a starting position for attacking the North. They have also committed grave provocations against the North almost every day.

It goes without saying that their reckless military actions are motivated by a design to break through MDL and surprise the North according to the "fifth stage of the 5027 operation" they have already worked out with outsiders.

However, they are now charging in a far-fetched way that the north's soldiers "broke into" DMZ south of MDL, "violating the armistice agreement." This is a premeditated and deliberate plot to cover up their bellicose nature and find a pretext for provoking a war against the North.

Their provocations are also aimed at obstructing multi-channelled dialogue between the North and the United States.

We will never remain an onlooker to their reckless provocations against the North but decisively cope with them.

DPRK: 'War Exercise' by ROK, U.S. Reported

SK2305035496 Pyongyang KCNA in English 0332 GMT 23 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Pyongyang, May 23 (KCNA) — The South Korean puppets in league with the U.S. imperialist warmaniacs staged another criminal joint aerial war exercise with the support of overseas-based E-3 commanding plane in the skies above Wonju, Sangdong and Asan Bay on May 21, military sources said.

The exercise was for surprise preemptive strikes at main strategic objects in the depth area of the northern half of Korea.

Involved in the war gamble were more than 620 fighter planes of various types belonging to the South Korean puppet Air Force, the U.S. Seventh Air Force and the U.S. Pacific Fleet.

On May 20 and 21, some 20 helicopter gunships of the puppet army flew to the skies above the western and eastern sectors of the front from the depth area to stage missile strike exercises aiming at the objects in the forefront area of the northern half of Korea.

Groups of heavy tanks and 105 mm and 155 mm artillery groups fired hundreds of shells towards the forefront area in the central and western sectors of the front, inciting a war fever on the same days.

DPRK: CPRF Denounces ROK for 'Suppression' of 'Democratic Forces'

SK2305043796 Pyongyang KCNA in English 0335 GMT 23 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Pyongyang, May 23 (KCNA) — The secretariat of the Committee for the Peaceful Reunification of the Fatherland [CPRF] issued Information No. 712 on Wednesday [22 May] denouncing the Kim Yong-sam group for the suppression of the pro-reunification democratic forces.

Recently, the Kim Yong-sam group held a "meeting of chiefs of security-related ministries and agencies" and discussed intensifying the suppression, alleging that the activities of the "leftists" have gone beyond the "danger line."

The information said the puppets' suppression is a desperate reactionary offensive to slay patriotic-minded students and people who are fighting in South Korea for independence, democracy and the reunification of the country, by charging them with being "pro-communist elements siding with the North," and get out of the "civilian" fascist ruling crisis.

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Their allegation about the "leftists' activities" is nothing but a brazen-faced pretext for justifying their murderous fascist moves and stifling South Korea's pro-reunification democratic forces, the information noted, and stressed:

Their unjustifiable suppression of the students and people in their righteous struggle has revealed again that they are a group of heinous fascist murderers and separatists.

DPRK: Signing of KEDO-DPRK Protocol Agreement Viewed

SK2305101796 Pyongyang KCNA in English 0610 GMT 23 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Pyongyang, May 23 (KCNA) — Experts' delegations of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) and the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organisation (KEDO) held a negotiation on signing a consular protocol in New York from April 8 to May 22.

At the negotiation the two sides discussed and agreed on the legal status of the KEDO and matters arising in consular protection of those involved in the project that are needed for the implementation of the agreement on provision of light-water reactors which was signed in December last year under the DPRK-U.S. agreed framework, in accordance with the agreement on the provision of light-water reactors, relevant international law, international usage and the specific conditions of light-water reactor project.

As a result, the agreement on the provision of light-water reactors has entered the stage of implementation.

DPRK: Hong Song-nam Delegation Arrives in Beijing

SK2205140896 Pyongyang Korean Central Broadcasting Network in Korean 1300 GMT 22 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] A delegation of our government led by Vice Premier Hong Song-nam, arrived in Beijing on 21 May on a visit to China. The delegation was greeted at the airport by Li Guohua, vice minister of PRC Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Cooperation; officials concerned from the ministry, and our country's ambassador to China.

DPRK: Hwang Chang-yop Attends Talks With Visiting Pakistan Delegation

SK2305100196 Pyongyang KCNA in English 0900 GMT 23 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Pyongyang, May 23 (KCNA) — Talks were held between the delegations of the Workers' Party of Korea and the Pakistan People's Party in Pyongyang on May 23.

Present at the talks on our side were Hwang Chang-yop, secretary of the Central Committee of the WPK, Chi Chae-yong, deputy department director of the WPK Central Committee and other officials concerned and on the opposite side were members of the delegation of the Pakistan People's Party led by Qayyum Nizami, political advisor to the party's chairwoman and member of the party Central Executive Committee.

The both sides informed each other of their party activities and discussed the work to further strengthen and develop the friendly and cooperative relations between the two parties and the two countries.

The talks proceeded in a friendly atmosphere.

DPRK: Syria, PRC, Pakistan Major Humanitarian Food Donors to DPRK

SK2305095796 Pyongyang KCNA in English 0855 GMT 23 May 96

["Brisk International Food Aid to DPRK" — KCNA headline]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Pyongyang, May 23 (KCNA) — International food aid to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in the wake of flood damage last year is briskly going on at a time when the Korean people are endeavouring to make their motherland more prosperous in hearty response to the intention of the Workers' Party of Korea to live not for today but for tomorrow, singleheartedly united around the Great Leader Comrade Kim Chong-il.

The Syrian Government, which had sent 40,000 tons of food to the DPRK for its flood damage, decided some time ago to grant another 100,000 tons of food to it.

Such a step of the Syrian Government is an expression of the friendship and solidarity between the governments and peoples of the two countries based on the deep intimacy forged between the great leader of our party and people comrade Kim Il-song and the respected leader of the Syrian people His Excellency Hafiz al-Asad long ago.

The Chinese Government, having sent a large quantity of emergency relief materials amounting to 30 million yuan in RMB [renminbi, the PRC currency] to the

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DPRK, decided to grant 20,000 tons of food additionally.

5,000 tons of food from Her Excellency Benazir Bhutto, prime minister of Pakistan, and 1,000 tons of food from the Indian Government will soon arrive in Korea.

Besides, Switzerland, Norway, Denmark, Germany, Russia, the United States, Sweden, Australia, the Netherlands and Caritas, the World Vision International and other organisations rendered humanitarian food aid to the DPRK through the World Food Program, the UN Children's Fund, the League of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and other international organisations.

The food aid which has come to the DPRK from foreign countries, international organisations and nongovernmental groupings for last year's unprecedented flood damage in some areas of the DPRK amounts to more than 200,000 tons.

DPRK: NODONG SINMUN Supports Syria on Mideast Peace, Golan

SK2305093496 Pyongyang KCNA in English 0841 GMT 23 May 96

["NODONG SINMUN on Principled Stand of Syria Toward Mideast Problem" — KCNA headline]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Pyongyang, May 23 (KCNA) — The Korean people will as ever actively support the just and principled stand of the Syrian people for the country's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

NODONG SINMUN today says this in a signed article titled "Principled Stand of Syria Toward Mideast Problem".

Under the correct leadership of President Hafiz al-Asad the government and people of Syria are actively striving for a package and fair solution to the Mideast problem, firmly defending the independence and sovereignty of the country, the daily says, and continues:

The principled stand of Syria toward the Mideast problem is evoking support and sympathy of Mideast countries and many other countries in the world.

Syria is playing a very important role in the struggle of the Arab countries to achieve peace in the Mideast. It is making active efforts to realize a package peace on the "land for peace" principle in this region.

Such a stand of Syria is found at its talks with Israel.

At the bilateral talks with Israel, Syria clarified that it is ready to settle the matter of future relations on the basis of the total withdrawal of the Israeli troops from the Golan Heights. This is just in any aspect and a matter of Syria's territorial integrity which needs neither compromise nor concession. Syria's just and principled stand at the talks reflects the desire of the Syrian people for independence and peace.

It is an inviolable legitimate right of the Syrian people to retake the occupied Golan Heights. No one can break the will of the Syrian people to retake it.

Israel should unconditionally withdraw its troops from the Golan Heights and return it to Syria as justly demanded by Syria.

DPRK: Meeting Marks 57th Anniversary of Musan Area Battle Victory

SK2305054596 Pyongyang KCNA in English 0431 GMT 23 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Pyongyang, May 23 (KCNA) — A Yanggang provincial meeting was held in Taehongdan County Wednesday to mark the 57th anniversary of the victory in the Musan area battle, which was organized and commanded by the great leader President Kim Il-song in May 1939, when the anti-Japanese revolutionary struggle was in full swing.

The battle in Musan area was a historic [word indistinct] of advance into the homeland, in which President Kim Il-song advanced into the [word indistinct] the main unit of the homeland, the Korean People's Revolutionary Army [KPRA], and gave successive blows to the Japanese imperialist aggression army, who had been hard hit in "winter operation", and opened a new phase of the anti-Japanese revolutionary war.

Addressing the meeting, Sim Pu-kil, secretary of the Yanggang Provincial Committee of the Workers' Party of Korea, recalled that having led the unit to Sinsadong through [word indistinct] hill and Lake Samji, President Kim Il-song conducted energetic political activities to arouse the popular masses to the sacred struggle for the restoration of the country and annihilated the Japanese imperialist aggressors by his outstanding strategies superb war tactics.

With the victory in the Musan area battle, manifold difficulties had been overcome and a new phase favorable for the Korean revolution opened, the reporter stressed.

He highly praised the brilliant revolutionary activities and immortal achievements of President Kim Il-song, vowing that following the victory in the Musan area battle he conducted superb KPRA large and small unit operations with the Paekdusan secret base at the centre of the leadership, leading the Korean revolution to victory and accelerating the great event of the restoration of the fatherland [words indistinct].

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A similar meeting was also held in Samjiyon County on the same day.

DPRK: Yanggang Provincial Meeting Marks Anti-Japanese Battle

SK2305124796 Pyongyang KCNA in English 0431 GMT 23 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Pyongyang, May 23 (KCNA) — A Yanggang provincial meeting was held in Taehongdan County Wednesday [22 May] to mark the 57th anniversary of the victory in the Musan area battle, which was organized and commanded by the Great Leader President Kim Il-song in May 1939, when the anti-Japanese revolutionary struggle was in full swing.

The battle in Musan area was a historic operation of advance into the homeland, in which President Kim Il-song advanced into the homeland, leading the main unit of the Korean People's Revolutionary Army [KPRA], and gave successive blows to the Japanese imperialist aggression army, who had been hard hit in "winter operation", and opened a new phase of the anti-Japanese revolutionary war.

Addressing the meeting, Sim Pu-kil, secretary of the Yanggang Provincial Committee of the Workers' Party of Korea, recalled that having led the unit to Sinsadong through Pege Hill and Lake Samji, President Kim Il-song conducted energetic political activities to arouse the popular masses to the sacred struggle for the restoration of the country and annihilated the Japanese imperialist aggressors by his outstanding strategies superb war tactics. [sentence as received]

With the victory in the Musan area battle, manifold difficulties had been overcome and a new phase favourable for the Korean revolution opened, the reporter stressed.

He highly praised the brilliant revolutionary activities and immortal achievements of President Kim Il-song, (?noting) that following the victory in the Musan area battle he conducted superb KPRA large and small unit operations with the Paektusan secret base as the centre of the leadership, leading the Korean revolution to victory and accelerating the great event of the restoration of the fatherland.

A similar meeting was also held in Samjiyon County on the same day.

DPRK: Kim Chong-il Thanks Researcher, Security Officer, Others

SK2305043396 Pyongyang KCNA in English 0321 GMT 23 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Pyongyang, May 23 (KCNA) — The great leader Comrade Kim Chong-il sent thanks to Yi Yong-chun, researcher of Pyongyang music and dance university, and his wife Kim Sun-ok, O Kwan-chong, public security officer of the security department of Tokchon City, South Pyongan Province, Yang Yong-ae, worker of the Sinpo fish cannery in South Hamgyong Province, and officials and working people of other units for displaying communist traits.

South Korea

ROK: DPRK's MiG-19 Pilot Defects, Arrives at Suwon Air Force Base

SK2 05022996 Seoul KBS-1 Radio Network in Korean 0218 GMT 23 May 96

[Report by Chang Ki-chol from the Ministry of National Defense in Seoul — live]

[FBIS Translated Text] A North Korean MiG plane defected to the ROK at around 1100 this morning [0200 GMT] through the territorial airspace of the West Sea [Yellow Sea].

It has been learned this North Korean plane is a MiG-19 of the North Korean Air Force. It entered the ROK territorial airspace through the West Sea and safely landed at Suwon Air Force Base under the escort of ROK Air Force planes.

ROK: DPRK Pilot Identified as Captain Yi Chol-su

SK2305032096 Seoul KBS-1 Radio Network in Korean 0300 GMT 23 May 96

[Report by Yu Hyon-sun]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] A MiG-19 of the North Korean Air Force defected to the ROK this morning through the ROK territorial airspace of the West Sea [Yellow Sea].

It has been learned that the pilot of this MiG plane is Yi Chol-su, a 30-year-old captain of the Onchon Aviation Regiment of the North Korean Air Force, and the reasons for his defection have yet to be disclosed. [passage omitted]

ROK: DPRK Defector Said 'Bemedaled Elite' Air Force Pilot

SK2305104696 Seoul YONHAP in English 0955 GMT 23 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Seoul, May 23 (YONHAP) — The North Korean pilot who flew his MiG-19 into the South in a daring defection Thursday [23 May] was a bemedaled elite pilot of the North Korean Air Force, a Defense Ministry official said.

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He said Capt. Yi Chol-su, age 30, had been "honored" in North Korea with no fewer than five medals.

The medals he received included the National Flag Medal (Class 3), Medal of Worrier's Honor (Class 2), [as received] two air medals and a Three-Revolutions medal.

When he deplaned, he had in his possession a pistol, 30 rounds of ammunition, an aviation map and a wrist watch.

Capt. Yi was commissioned as second lieutenant upon graduation from the 17th Air Officers School in August 1986. During his ten-year service as pilot, however, his flying hours totaled mere 350 hours, the official said.

ROK: Defecting Pilot Holds News Conference Upon Arrival

SK2305061896 Seoul KBS-1 Radio Network in Korean 0500 GMT 23 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Reporter Kim Hyo-sok at Suwon Airport, where the MiG-19 landed, is on the line. It is very unusual for a defecting pilot to hold a news conference immediately upon arrival. [Kim] Yes. Captain Yi Chol-su, who defected today, identified himself as chief pilot of the 2d Battalion, 57th Regiment, 1st Air Division of the North Korean Air Force and the Anti-Aircraft Command. Captain Yi started his military career in 1982 when he entered the Aviation Officers School of the Air Force. His father, Yi Chun-sang, 62, also worked at Samjiyon Airport as an engine technician. His father lived with him after retirement.

Captain Yi Chol-su married Yi Song-ok, 27, in May 1991, and has a five-year-old son and a three-year-old daughter.

Right after he defected, Yi asked for some spirits saying he was too excited. The ROK military gave him a glass of whisky.

Yi appeared excited but clearly answered the reporters' questions. Asked about his motive for defection, he said that he could no longer live in the North Korean establishment, then he shouted hurrah for joy. Yi has reportedly been transferred to Seoul for further interrogation.

ROK: More on Defecting Pilot's News Conference

SK2305071596 Seoul YONHAP in English 0652 GMT 23 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Seoul May 23 (YONHAP) — The North Korean pilot of a MiG-19 who defected to the South Thursday [23 May] morning has been identified as Capt. Yi Chol-su, 30, a "responsible" flier at the Second Battalion, 57th Regiment, First Air Division, Air Force and Air Defense Command, according to the Air Force.

Appearing before the press, the North Korean Air Force officer said, "I've come to the South because I can no longer live in the North Korean establishment."

Asked how he felt when he landed in the South, he exclaimed, "Long live the Republic of Korea! Long live the Republic of Korea! Long live the Republic of Korea!"

Born in Orang, North Hamkyong Province, on June 2, 1966, he entered Samjiyon Middle and High School in September 1973 and the North Korean Air Force Academy in May 1982. He was commissioned as an Air Force officer in August 1982.

His father, Chon-sang, 62, wife, Yi Song-ok, 27, and two children — son, Myong-chin, 5, and daughter, Myong-sim, 3 — all live in Onchon, South Pyongan Province.

His mother died in August 1992.

His father worked as aircraft engine mechanic at Samjinyon Air Force Base before being discharged from the Air Force in 1987.

The Air Force detected the North Korean fighter on radar at an unidentified air defense unit at 10:45 AM [0145 GMT] Thursday. After noticing something unusual about the North Korean plane's direction and speed of flight, the Air Force Operations Command ordered two F-16 fighters flying over Chongju on a training mission to head northward to intercept the North Korean plane.

At 10:49, the North Korean plane crossed the northern limit line of South Korea's territorial air space, and continued flying southward until it was very close to the two F-16 fighters 15 miles west of Kanghwa Island at 10:53.

After confirming that the North Korean pilot wanted to defect, the F-16 fighters took positions alongside and behind the defector plane to guide it to a safe landing.

When the F-16 fighters approached, the MiG-19 slowed down and tipped its wing to indicate an intention to defect.

By order of the Air Force Operations Command, the F-16 fighters guided the defector plane to Suwon Air Force Base and the North Korean warplane landed safely there at 11:09.

The defector plane flew at a maximum speed of more than 400 knots and there were no unusual North Korean Air Force movements while it was flying southward.

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ROK: Defense Official on DPRK MiG-19 Pilot's Defection

SK2305031896 Seoul YONHAP in English 0253 GMT 23 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Seoul, May 23 (YONHAP) — A North Korean MiG jet fighter defected to South Korea Thursday [23 May]. The North Korean warplane landed in an unidentified South Korean Air Force base.

Defense Ministry Spokesman Yun Chang-no identified the North Korean fighter as a MiG-19, but did not identify the pilot.

The pilot is being questioned about his motives for defecting, Yun said.

The North Korean fighter took off from an airbase in Onsan, North Korea, early in the morning and flew southward over the West Sea [Yellow Sea].

After encountering a formation of South Korean Air Force intercepter planes, the North Korean warplane pilot tipped his wing to signal his intention to defect, and the South Korean intercepters guided him to Suwon Air Force base for a safe landing, Yun explained.

It was the first North Korean MiG-19 defection in 13 years; the last defection was by Capt. Yi Ung-pyong in February 1983.

ROK: Defecting DPRK Aircraft Sets Off Security Alarm in Seoul

SK2305021896 Seoul KBS-1 Radio Network in Korean 0209 GMT 23 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Countrymen, the security alarm that was issued in Seoul, Inchon, and Kyonggi areas was caused by a defecting North Korean aircraft. We now cancel the alarm. Please return to your work. This was an announcement by the Civil Defense Disaster Headquarters.

ROK: Civil Defense Alarm Fails To Sound in Seoul Area

SK2305055496 Seoul KBS-1 Radio Network in Korean 0500 GMT 23 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Civil Defense security alarm was not raised in the Seoul metropolitan area when the defecting North Korean MiG fighter flew southward this morning, revealing a big loophole in our air defense system.

The Seoul Alarm Control Center, which is in charge of sounding the security alarm in the Seoul area, was notified by the Theater Air Control Center of the U.S. Forces in Korea, but it was unable to sound the alarm as it encountered problems with the lines connecting the municipal, ward, and tong offices.

The Seoul Municipal Office believes there is a problem with the control device of the alarm siren, and is looking into the exact cause. The Seoul Municipal Office plans to conduct a thorough investigation into why the alarm was not sounded and will punish responsible persons.

ROK: DPRK Reportedly Bans Take-Off of All Air Force Fighters

SK2305054396 Seoul KBS-1 Radio Network in Korean 0500 GMT 23 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] A North Korean pilot defected with a MiG-19 fighter this morning. Yi Kun-u reports from the Ministry of National Defense [MND].

[Yi] The MND has just made an official announcement at 2:00 PM [0500 GMT]. In reaction to the defection, the North Korean authorities reportedly prohibited all North Korean Air Force fighters from taking off at 11:02 [0202 GMT] this morning.

ROK: Five DPRK Patrol Boats Cross Sea Boundary

SK2305005196 Seoul KBS-1 Radio Network in Korean 0000 GMT 23 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Five North Korean high-speed patrol boats crossed the northern boundary of the West Sea [Yellow Sea] early this morning and cruised for more than 20 minutes. They returned to the North after being checked by a rapidly deployed ROK Navy guard ship.

According to the Ministry of National Defense, five North Korean high-speed patrol boats crossed the northern boundary of the West Sea near Sochong Island at 5:51 AM [2051 GMT 22 May] this morning and sailed south for 5 km. When an ROK guard ship was rapidly deployed, the North Korean patrol boats returned to the North after sailing in the southern waters for 20 minutes.

The North Korean patrol boats' crossing of the northern boundary is noteworthy because it took place only a week after seven North Korean soldiers violated the Military Demarcation Line inside the DMZ on 17 May.

Prior to this, two North Korean high-speed patrol boats crossed the northern boundary in the West Sea on 20 April.

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Burma

Burma: SLORC's Maung Aye Issues Warning to 'Destructive Elements'

BK2205124296 Rangoon TV Myanmar Network in Burmese 1330 GMT 20 May 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] A ceremony to inaugurate the opening of the Pagan-Kyaukpadaung railroad construction project, which is to be undertaken solely by soldiers of the No. 33 Light Infantry Division [LID], was held at 0700 near the Pagan Railway Station work site in Pagan-Nyaung-U. General Maung Aye, vice chairman of the State Law and Order Restoration Council [SLORC], deputy commander in chief of the Defense Services, and army commander in chief, attended the ceremony and delivered an address. [passage omitted]

Gen. Maung Aye noted the three principal duties of today's Defense Services are the national defense duty, training, and public welfare services. [passage omitted]

He urged Defense Services personnel to participate in national development endeavors to catch up with the nation's neighbors. He noted the Defense Services is implementing the 12 political, economic, and social objectives with goodwill for the emergence of a peaceful, modern, and developed nation. He said these objectives must be regarded as norms by Defense Services personnel.

Gen. Maung Aye noted that the country has become peaceful and has been making good political, economic, and social progress since the Defense Services diligently discharges its duties. He reminded the Defense Services personnel that some destructive elements—who cannot bear to see the country prosper and the national races united—are attempting subversive acts, especially to create misunderstandings among the Defense Services personnel and between the Defense Services personnel and the populace.

He added that the Defense Services will dispose of the destructive elements who are hampering national development. He finally exhorted the Defense Services personnel to strive for the early completion of the Pagan-Kyaukpadaung railroad. [passage omitted]

Next, Gen. Maung Aye, Lieutenant General Tin U, SLORC secretary-2 and army chief of staff, ministers, and senior military officers departed by helicopters from Pagan-Nyaung-U to Koebin Village in Sinbaungwe Township and attended a ceremony to inaugurate the opening of the Ekrit-Satthwa section of the Prome-Aunglan-Taungdwingyi railroad construction project, which is to be undertaken solely by 3,000 soldiers of the No. 66 LID. [passage omitted]

Gen. Maung Aye said he would like to explain to those present at this ceremony about the Defense Services' endeavors for national development and the accomplishments of the projects. [passage omitted]

He noted the people are now able to live and earn their livelihood peacefully since success has been achieved in striving for stability, the prevalence of law and order, and peace and tranquility.

Maung Aye said all must be vigilant against the groups who are creating instability to destabilize the country. He said the Defense Services leaders are discharging their duties with four outlooks — military, political, economic, and administrative — and they will always ward off the dangers of destructive elements with military awareness. He noted some destructionist groups in the country are beginning to undermine the stability of the state and the prevalence of law and order and regional peace and tranquility. Though the SLORC is a military government, it is governing in accordance with civil laws and rules and regulations. Some subversive acts have even been overlooked. If, however, these destructive elements endanger the stability of the state, the rule of law and order, and the maintenance of peace and tranquility, effective action will be taken in the interest of the State and the people. [passage omitted]

Burma: Suu Kyi Says NLD Meeting To Go as Scheduled

OW2205143496 Tokyo NHK General Television Network in Japanese 1007 GMT 22 May 96

[Announcer-read report over video — recorded passage in English with Japanese subtitles, taken from the English; from the "NHK News" program]

[FBIS Translated Text] Burma's military government has been detaining members of the opposition National League for Democracy [NLD], which is led by pro-democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi. So far, at least 90 people are said to have been detained. In this connection, Ms. Suu Kyi granted a telephone interview to NHK a little while ago. She reiterated her intention to hold a political meeting scheduled for 26 May despite any actions the junta may take.

The NLD plans to hold a meeting at Ms. Suu Kyi's home in the capital of Rangoon on Sunday, 26 May. Prior to the meeting, Burma's junta is apparently detaining NLD members who they believe are preparing to attend the meeting. According to Ms. Suu Kyi, at least 90 people have been detained so far. Although the NLD won an overwhelming victory in a general election in 1990, the military government has so far refused to hand over power. Most of those detained are said to be NLD

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members who won in the general election. Since the morning of 22 May, Ms. Suu Kyi has been discussing with senior NLD officials how to deal with the situation. It is believed that the military government intends to continue detaining members of the NLD in an attempt to force the 26 May meeting to be virtually canceled.

NHK interviewed Ms. Suu Kyi shortly before 1900.

[Begin recording] [NHK reporter] Will you hold the NLD congress in this weekend?

[Suu Kyi] Yes, we will go ahead with our plan.

[NHK Reporter] Uh-huh, so I think the suppression will continue. Are you afraid that more NLD members will be detained?

[Suu Kyi] It is very possible that more will be detained. Already, they have detained 90. So it is quite possible that they will go ahead in detaining more.

[NHK Reporter] I think more suppression will continue for your party. So, are you afraid that you yourself will be detained again?

[Suu Kyi] We are not afraid of imprisonment. If you are afraid of imprisonment, you cannot work for democracy in Burma. Because everybody working for democracy in Burma is vulnerable to imprisonment. But it is quite possible that we shall be detained or arrested, charged with something or the other. [end recording]

The Japanese Government once decided to resume providing yen-based loans to Burma in view of the fact that the Burmese military junta released Suu Kyi from house arrest in July last year. However, a senior official of the Foreign Ministry gave his view this afternoon, saying, "It has become difficult for Japan to positively promote economic cooperation, including the yen-based loan program." He added: "We are concerned that conflicts between the military junta and the NLD will worsen. We need to carefully watch developments in the situation. However, it has become rather difficult for us to resume yen-based loan and other cooperation programs."

Burma: Aung Suu Kyi Says 191 NLD Activists Detained

BK2305110996 Hong Kong AFP in English 1106 GMT 23 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Rangoon, May 23 (AFP) - Pro-democracy leader Aung an Suu Kyi announced Thursday [23 May] that Burmese authorities had detained 191 activists from her National League for Democracy (NLD) ahead of a key opposition meeting.

Speaking to foreign and local journalists, she said the arrests "did not come as a complete surprise" and pledged that a meeting of NLD candidates who won seats in the abortive 1990 general election would go ahead.

Burma: NLD Spokesman Expects Detentions To Continue Until 25 May

BK2305024496 Bangkok ASIA TIMES in English 23 May 96 pp 1, 2

[Report by Stephen Brookes in Rangoon]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Myanmar's [Burma] military rulers detained a total of 90 people by Wednesday [23 May] evening in an effort to prevent pro-democracy activists from marking the sixth anniversary of their abortive general election victory, opposition officials said.

The detentions were expected to continue through the week, the sources said.

An official with the National League for Democracy (NLD), the main opposition party, said 90 people had been taken into custody as of 4pm on Wednesday, 22 of them in a sweep late on Tuesday night in Yangon [Rangoon].

"We expect the arrests to continue until Saturday," said an NLD spokesman at Aung San Suu Kyi's Yangon home. "We think they will arrest everyone except the members of the Central Executive Committee", which includes Suu Kyi, Kyi Maung, Tin Oo, Aung Shwe and Oo Lwin.

The detentions appeared to be designed "to nip this weekend's convention in the bud", said an analyst, referring to a planned meeting on Sunday of the 392 elected NLD politicians elected in Myanmar's last general election six years ago, when the party won 82 percent of the vote but was not allowed to form a government. Suu Kyi was placed under house arrest in July 1989 and released in July 1995.

The United States State Department and Japan have both criticized this week's wave of detentions.

While Myanmar's official media continued the warnings it has been issuing since Friday, Yangon remained quiet on Wednesday with no apparent protests and Suu Kyi seemed to be under no personal threat. The NLD said it planned to go ahead with its weekend meeting despite the detentions. Almost half the representatives have already gathered in Yangon.

While the government has yet to make any comment on the matter, one informed source in Yangon said none of those arrested had been charged. They were being held

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for "routine interrogation" and most were expected to be released in a week to 10 days, the source said.

"This is clearly a policy of containment," said another observer. "It's a preemptive strike to stop the meetings from happening. But it could degenerate into a crackdown. I wouldn't be surprised to see barricades go up."

Detained in the Tuesday night sweep were two NLD members close to Suu Kyi — Win Htein, a personal assistant who schedules her meetings, and Moe Thu, the editor of Dana magazine.

"They [the authorities] came to Win Htein's house at about 11:30 last night," said an NLD source. "He demanded to see a warrant for his arrest but they did not have one." Win Htein, a former military officer, had been a target of the government for some time, said an observer. "This is a way for them to strike close to the heart of the NLD."

Some analysts in Yangon speculated that a serious confrontation was increasingly likely. "She [Suu Kyi] is pushing the limits. She's had enough and now she's got the attention of the world."

Other analysts said the government might detain most of the NLD delegates for a short time, then allow the "hardcore" party members to gather in Yangon where they would be arrested. "The government doesn't want to arrest 400 people," said one observer.

Burma: Aung San Suu Kyi Aide Detained; Total Held at Least 110

BK2305035296 Hong Kong AFP in English 0341 GMT 23 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Rangoon, May 23 (AFP) — The Burmese junta is now holding at least 110 people in a continuing roundup of pro-democracy activists, an opposition source said Thursday [23 May].

Among the latest detainees was Aye Win, a personal assistant to National League for Democracy (NLD) leader Aung San Suu Kyi, and who frequently acted as her spokesman.

All but four of those held were NLD candidates who won seats in the May 27, 1990, general elections and who had planned to attend an NLD meeting in Rangoon to mark the anniversary of the vote.

Between 200 and 300 people were expected to attend the meeting May 26-29 at the lakeside compound where Aung San Suu Kyi had been held for nearly six years under house arrest until her release last July.

NLD officials have said they expect the number of people detained since Monday to continue to rise. "We haven't been able to get information about the others yet," the opposition source said.

The remaining four confirmed detained were Aye Win, another assistant to Aung San Suu Kyi, Win Thein, Mou Thu, the editor of an economic journal, and Thein Tin.

NLD candidates swept 392 of 485 contested seats in the 1990 elections, but the junta refused to hand over power.

A constitutional convention sponsored by the junta meets periodically in Rangoon to outline a new constitution which will lead to fresh elections.

Burma: Article Warns Suu Kyi's NLD of Collapse

BK2205150196 Rangoon KYEMON in Burmese 19, 20 May 96

[Article in two installments by U Than Maung; "When Will the Snake Charming Act End?"]

[FBIS Translated Text] [19 May, p 6] The "snake charming act" (with three poisonous snakes — one female Cobra, a banded Trait, and a Viper) which usually begins at about 1600 in the afternoon every Saturday and Sunday on the platform by the road in front of No 54-56, University Avenue, Yangon [Rangoon] has been going on for many months. How long will they continue the act? When will it end?

Dear leaders, who are striving steadfastly day and night for building a united, developed, prosperous and modern nation in Myanmar or in the Myanmar community:

I read an article by West German Historian Michael Sturmer [preceding name in English] on page 38 in the Newsweek magazine of 10 September 1990. Take note of this quote: "When empires collapse, they do so with a bang not with a whimper." [preceding quote in English]

To judge whether this historian's proposition is correct or not, we can consider the collapse of the Soviet Union, which thrived for over 70 years, and that of the communist countries of East Europe, the German Democratic Republic, Romania, and Yugoslavia (and how the rulers who lost power were killed or tortured).

Unexpectedly, in the post Burma Socialist Program Party's 26-year era, there were 8-8-88 democracy and political disturbances and the formation of various "Unions" of universities, schools, factories and mills, offices, and governmental and private organizations (a primary school union, a pupils union, a monks union, a young monks union, a doctors union, a teachers union, a nurses union, a nuns union, a beauticians—gays—union, a housekeepers union, an aged persons union, and a trishaw peddlers union) all over the country led

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by leftist, centrist, and rightist political opportunists, those who were old members of the Revolutionary Council, senior and junior ministers of the Burma Socialist Program Party [BSPP], military officers, old White-and Red-flag communists, and old socialists of the AFPFL [Anti Fascists People's Freedom League]. They incited huge public riots and demonstrations and waged strikes all over the country, opened strike camps, coerced the Burma Socialist Program Party, pulled the administrative machinery to a halt, prompted anarchic acts in both urban and rural areas, and elected Daw Suu Kyi, who, after marrying an Englishman and living in England for 28 years, was showing instant "love" for Myanmar, as "a great, great leader"; and due to political coercion and anarchism, the state power collapsed with a bang within a few days.

The opinion that "When empires collapse, they do so with a bang not with a whimper" [preceding quote in English] is very well-founded.

"The collapse or annihilation of rulers and empires comes with a bang leaving no time for whining," and all collapses have happened in this manner.

Bitter and painful lessons can be learnt from various communities or the socioeconomic and political situations of various countries.

The collapse of "human civilizations," including the Roman civilization, which emerged 1,600 years ago, can be studied in world history.

Karl Marx and Engels said "a race should and must take lessons from countries that developed or collapsed earlier."

Shin Maha Ratthasara [renowned Burmese laureate] exhorted us to study diligently to be able to say what we want to say without forgetting the meaning so that we will be bold and have no fear like a lion, and our resolve will be firm and strong like a pillar. What I would like to tell some SLORC [State Law and Order Restoration Council] leaders, who are striving strenuously for a new united, prosperous, and modern nation in the course of "revolution from above," [preceding three words in quote rendered in English"] is this:

In Myanmar [Burmese] history between the end of World War II in 1945 and the post-independence period starting from 1948, there were splits within the AFPFL, which was led by Bogyoke Aung San in 1946-47. The Burma Communist Party led by Thakhin Than Tun was expelled from AFPFL; the "Red Socialist" party led by Widura Thakhin Chit Maung and Thakhin Lwin quit the Socialist Party, which was led by U Ba Swe, U Kyaw Nyein and Bogyoke Aung Gyi; Thakhin Soe also split from the Burma Communist Party, which was led by Thakhin Than Tun, Thakhin Thein Pe (U Thein Pe Myint), and himself and formed the "Red Flag Communist Party (Burma Communist Party)." The People's Voluntary Organization, PVO, which was founded and led by Bogyoke Aung San also split into "the PVO Yellow faction" led by Bohmu Aung and "the PVO White faction" led by Bo Po Kun; within the Thakhin Soe-led Red Flag Communist Party itself, Ko Htoo and Ko Tun Sein quit forming "the Htoo Sein Party"; and the AFPFL, which was in power again split into two — "the AFPFL Clean faction" led by U Nu and Thakhin Tin and "the AFPFL Stable faction" led by U Ba Swe and U Kyaw Nyein in 1957-58. During this period, there was no consolidation of unity within "Pa-ma-nya-ta," which was a legal opposition party. There were various groups and organizations and it was all mayhem. Again in 1960-61, the ruling Pyidaungsu Party (Pa-hta-sa Party), which reorganized the AFPFL-Clean Party led by U Nu and Thakhin Tin, separated into "the U Group" "the Bo Group" and "the Thakhin Group" (but they did not reach a state of secession).

The story of Myanmar political history that I have described above does not include the splits of the nationalities parties such as the KNU [Karen National Union], KIA [Kachin Independence Army], the Shan State Liberation Party, and the Kayah State Liberation Party. It does not include the splits of the GCBA [General Council of Burma Association], which was very famous and popular for about 20 years between 1926 and 1943, nor the splits of "the Doh Bamar Asiayon (Thakhin Asiayon)" which was well-known all over the country between 1938 and 1943.

The splits I have touched upon took place between the post-war period from 1945 and the post-independence period of 1948-58.

Now, let's continue to discuss the history of the Myanmar divisions.

Some military leaders, descendants of old rulers who felt bitter about anarchism and had learned lessons from the 60-year political history of 1926 to 1988, rescued Myanmar communities vigilantly and conscientiously; these were on the verge of collapse from anarchic acts such as the 8-8-88 demonstrations, strikes, and strike camps, huge riots, coercions, arson, lootings, destructions, and brutal killings. The "8-8-88 heroes," "the strike committees," and "the strike camps" or overt and underground destructionists who were becoming political anarchists [preceding two words in English] were demolished.

The "enlightened top brass" [preceding three words in English] of the military leaders

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a. disbanded the one-party system,

b. scrapped the socialist economy,

c. is sowing seeds to establish a multiparty democracy that will be suitable for the socioeconomic development of developing nations,

d. is slowly and gradually implementing a market economy, and

e. has officially permitted foreign investment and technical know-how after promulgating the necessary laws.

With the aforementioned political policies of the SLORC, the formation and movement of political parties was allowed in accord with item-C.

Because of this permission, various political opportunists who were silent and had not dared to show their "heads" during the entire 26-year BSPP rule reappeared like croaking "frogs" in the rainy season and formed more than 200 political parties without having any political ideology.

This can be correctly viewed politically and ideologically as "the political retaliation" of coercive and anarchic politicians who came out of the 8-8-88 movement and the strike camps.

It can be seen in world history that the "revolutions from below" such as the Great October Revolution, which took place in Russia in the early 20th century (1917), and the French Revolution of the 18th century (1789) collapsed and are no more in existence at the present day because they could not practically carry out the socioeconomic development of the world's communities.

The 8-8-88 groups and strikers led by Daw Suu Kyi attempted in 1988, 1989, and 1990 to copy the type of old-fashioned revolution found in the Russian and French Revolutions, which does not conform to the needs of the times, the place, or the community in Myanmar.

The formation of over 200 political parties was the outcome of this process.

Daw Suu Kyi's group attempted to replenish the faulty socioeconomic revolutionary ideals of the post 18th century and early 20th century periods.

If we objectively review the formation and organization of the Daw Suu Kyi-led National League for Democracy, which was the most amazingly popular party of the over 200 political parties, it can be seen that:

It could not stand for long as a united, consolidated party organization like the GCBA, the Doh Bamar Asiayon Thakhin Groups, the Socialist Party, the Communist Party, the AFPFL and the Pa-hta-sa Party, which had emerged and become very prominent 60 years before it. It drowned in the splits of political history.

Evident proof of this was that the "National League for Democracy, NLD", split into two — the Bogyoke Aung Gyi-led group and the Daw Suu Kyi-led group — less than two years after its formation.

It can be seen that even within the current female-led NLD of Daw Suu Kyi there are an old military officers group, an intellectual group, a student youth group, and an old AFPFL, communist, and socialist group.

If the more than 60-year-old Myanmar political history is studied appropriately, it can be clearly seen that there has been no political party able to effectively serve the national interest (in the political, economic, and social sectors) up to now (1996).

Regarding the political parties that can serve the national interest effectively, an East European politician once said:

"Eastern Europe, Asia, and Africa do not in fact have political parties in the Western sense. They are only groups brought together under a prominent leader, who for the most part dwarfs the entire party in importance." [preceding paragraph rendered in English]

[20 May, p 5] Now, firm proof of this statement can be seen in the prominence of Lenin, Stalin, Mao Zedong, Chiang Kai-shek, Ho Chi Minh, Tito, Ceausescu, Bogyoke Aung San, Thakhin Soe, Thakhin Than Tun, and General Ne Win and their leadership in their respective political parties and organizations.

The prominence of Suu Kyi and the popularity of her National League for Democracy also fits in with the aforementioned statement.

Suu Kyi's prominence dwarfs her party in importance. Her party is not as prominent or important as her.

Therefore, the so-called "revolutions" in the post 18th century and the early 20th century are, in fact, "revolutions from below". [preceding three words in English]

The politically and theoretically enlightened top brass [preceding words given in English] of the Tatmadaw [Defense Services] leaders took over the responsibilities of the State with goodwill and conviction to serve the national interest; they do not behave as Daw Suu Kyi's group does, which whispers or shouts slanders in its smear campaign against SLORC [preceding four words in English], saying that "they took over state power forcibly to protect the life and property of the Burma Socialist Program Party top leaders and themselves."

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The validity of such accusations and allegations can be checked with the following quotable quote:

"England, it is true in causing social revolution in Hindustan (in India), was actuated only by the vilest interests, and was stupid in its manner of enforcing them. But that is not the question. The question is, can mankind fulfill its destiny without a fundamental revolution in the social state of Asia? If not, whatever may not have been the crimes of England she was the unconscious tool of history in bringing about that revolution." (Karl Marx — The British Rule in India) [preceding quote in English]

Karl Marx and Engels made this assessment of the social revolution in India caused by England, the colonial power, which transformed the old-fashioned Indian civilization into a modern one and dragged it into the civilized world community.

Dear England-returnee miss and your accomplices, when any ideological assessment of the SLORC's activities is made, there can be no question that it took over the duties of the state with goodwill. It is necessary only to observe that SLORC is building the nation into one that is united, prosperous, and modern in thoughts, words, and deeds. In politics, it is reasonable and realistic to find a solution to the problem not in words (oration), but with deeds (practice).

It is easy to make an outcry, just as an English saying has it: "Easier said than done" [preceding saying in English].

The England-returnee miss, who, after living in England humbly for about 28 years, is showing off herself in Myanmar in a saucy manner, and her accomplices should consider and logically apply Karl Marx's aforementioned deep thought.

Desiring and willing are not important; they do not play a decisive and primary role. Only what is done practically with a theoretical concept [preceding two words in English] and a clear and vigilant theoretical outlook [preceding two words in English] is important and plays the primary, decisive role.

There is an English proverb: "If wishes were horses, beggars might ride" [proverb published in English]. Priority must be given to what is more than what is wished to be.

Dear SLORC leaders, one of the verses of the Magadeva Treatise says if a man is wise and has a good heart, he can finish every task, big or small, like a sculptor who carves any way he wishes. I will not go into detail about the meaning of this verse, for it would amount to teaching a crocodile how to swim or preaching to a monk.

To shine in wisdom and knowledge, the state leader (government) must possess proper reasoning and a clear theoretical concept and outlook. It is also exhorted in the Lawkaniti Treatise that a ruler must constantly be diligent and vigilant. The ruler (government) usually encounters an enemy within and without as well as the lackeys of the alien. There are plenty of examples in world political history. It is therefore essential to have constant vigilance [preceding two words in English] against these dangers. According to Lawkaniti, contentment will lead to the downfall of a ruler (government).

The references given in the Magadeva Treatise and the Lawkaniti clearly indicate that they are the same in essence as the statements of Karl Marx and Engels. This can be seen in comparison with the following statement.

"Theory is a guide to practice (to action); practice is blind without theory. Theory is sterile without practice" [preceding statement in English].

As a Myanmar saying puts it: "Starting from the rubbish, the fire burnt down the mansion." Beginning with a fight between some students of the Rangoon Institute of Technology and some youths of the Insein Gyogon Ward at a roadside tea shop, a series of strikes such as the Phone Maw strike, the 8-8-88 strike, and the general strike broke out all over the country, and within a short period, anarchy was rampant and the country was on the verge of collapse. It was a regrettable experience.

Now, I would like to advise the SLORC leaders, who are striving for socioeconomic restructuring, to get rid of the rubbish that can start a fire and burn down the mansion and extinguish the remnants, which can flare up at any time.

"In this process of making positive endeavors of the government, certain lackeys of the imperialists are resorting to various means to create instability in the state. To breed suspicions and divisions among the national races and to slacken or impede pace of development of the national economy" (Lt. Gen. Khin Nyunt — 24/3/96 THE NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR page 1, col 3) [Khin Nyunt's address published in English].

What he means is that there are lackeys of the West who are creating instability within the country and suspicions and disunity among our national brethren and attempting to make national economic development stagnant.

The SLORC leaders must therefore have constant revolutionary vigilance. They have to act like a lion but not like a tiger. The lion king always makes the same

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effort to catch his prey, big or small. He never reduces his diligence and loses his vigilance.

The SLORC, which is leading a kind of revolution after demolishing the old Myanmar political, economic, and social systems, triumphed over the huge riots; the anarchic persons who threw stones, committed arson, lootings, destruction, and brutal killings in the 8-8-88 uprising; the strike camps; the strike committees; and the various unions that emerged in 1988-89.

It has won victory over the one-party system and the socialist economic system. It has made peace with 16 groups of our brethren, who resorted to armed struggle for nearly 50 years due to political, ideological, and racial differences.

Similarly, the SLORC has to continue its endeavors with unswerving diligence and constant vigilance to win over Daw Suu Kyi, whose position is an antagonistic one.

It may happen that the snake charmer can accidentally be bitten by the female cobra, the banded krait, or the viper. If the snake charmer is not skilled, one of the three poisonous snakes might escape and bite people.

Therefore, I would like to suggest that the snake charmer's show, which has been on for months, should be ended and the three poisonous snakes be put in the snake charmer's basket.

It is necessary to escape from a state of having a viper in the pouch.

Dear SLORC leaders, "When empires collapse, they do so with a bang, not with a whimper." Let's prevent with brilliant and clear theoretical concept and outlook any reoccurrence of a revolution from below or the kind of disturbances seen in the 8-8-88 general strike.

Burma: SLORC News Conference on Detentions

BK2305083496 Rangoon Radio Myanmar in Burmese 0500 GMT 23 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Information Committee of the State Law and Order Restoration Council [SLORC] held a news conference with local and foreign journalists at 0900 this morning at the Defense Services Guest House on Inya Road in Yangon [Rangoon] to explain the situation regarding the recent preemptive action being taken by authorities to prevent the likelihood of the National League for Democracy [NLD] causing any deterioration to the existing stability of the country.

The news conference was attended by Brigadier General Aung Thein, deputy leader of the SLORC Information Committee and director of the Directorate of Public Relations Psychological Warfare; U Thein Sein, committee member and deputy minister of information; Colonel Kyaw Win, deputy director of the Directorate of Defense Services Intelligence; Col. Kyaw Thein and Lieutenant Colonel Than Tun of the Defense Ministry; U Tin Kha, managing director of the News and Periodicals Enterprise; U Tin Ngwe, director general of the Myanmar [Burma] Television and Broadcasting Department, and directors and deputy directors; chief editors and subeditors of newspapers; U Sein Win, chairman of the Foreign Correspondents Club; and foreign journalists.

U Thein Sein, member of the SLORC Information Committee and deputy information minister, first explained that at a time when the SLORC is striving to build the country into a peaceful, modern, and developed nation, reports have been received of an NLD plan to convene a meeting with a mass rally from 26 to 29 May. He said that in view of this, some representatives who are planning to attend the meeting are being interrogated by the authorities concerned to preempt deterioration of the existing national stability.

He said the NLD had drafted an interim constitution after the 1990 elections and had been resorting to various means, including holding of the Gandhi Conference, to pave the way for transfer of power. When it was not successful, some fled to the jungle and formed a parallel government to organize armed resistance against the government, while some attempted to form a parallel government inside the country. In consideration of these events, the SLORC took preemptive action and detained some persons to prevent undesirable events.

When stability was achieved in the country in 1992, the SLORC issued Notification No. 11/92 and released the majority of detainees. The SLORC had already explained the political path that should be taken, based on the experience and circumstances that Myanmar undergone. That path is emergence of a new and enduring state constitution. Another stage is to build a modern and developed nation based on the new constitution. The SLORC is a government which is responsible for safeguarding the nation until such time as a government emerges in accordance with the new constitution.

Accordingly, the National Convention was convened to prescribe basic principles for drafting an enduring state constitution. Holding the National Convention is an unavoidable political path under existing political conditions.

Preliminary talks were held in 1992 to convene the National Convention, and the convention was opened in 1993. NLD chairman, U Aung Shwe, and elected representatives participated and consulted in the process of the convention. Soon after lifting restrictions under

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the Law for Safeguarding the State from the danger of Destructive Elements, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, former NLD general secretary, first met and consulted U Kyi Maung and held a news conference the next day — 11 January [1995]. She emphasized the need for dialogue during the news conference. She said we must chose between dialogue and utter devastation [preceding phrase given in English]. She called on the ASEAN [Association of Southeast Asian Nations] to refrain from engagement with Myanmar [Burma]. All these were aimed at getting foreign governments to exert pressure on Myanmar to bring about dialogue and to enable foreign media to relentlessly clamour and broadcast.

The world knows the SLORC is not engaged in destructive activities, but in constructive activities such as holding the National Convention, paving the way for emergence of a new state constitution, and building internal unity. Currently, the SLORC is engaged in constructive actions such as organizing ethnic armed groups and attainment of peace to terminate internal insurgency which was born with independence.

Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's appeal to the ASEAN to wait, to withhold assistance, and not to have engagement is aimed at creating a problem for the existing government which is working for development, and it amounts to using foreign countries to pressure the government. It is clear that these actions are aimed at creating a misunderstanding of and opposition to the SLORC government and applying pressure. In doing so, it is clear that contacts and assistance from abroad were used with the help of the foreign media.

Similarly, opposition groups abroad have adopted a similar tone. It seems that they are envious of the prospect of Myanmar becoming developed under the current SLORC government. In reality, if one really loves the country one should help regardless of who is in charge. Currently, the NLD is planning to hold a conference similar to the Gandhi Conference which was held after the 1990 elections. Since the beginning of May, foreign broadcasting stations have been carrying broadcasts on the sixth anniversary of the 1990 general elections.

Continuing, U Thein Sein said that if internal stability deteriorates, the students and youth pursuing their education are likely to once again face disruption in their education. It can also cause uncertainty and nervousness among the general public, affecting commercial activities and the normal flow of trade, and pose a danger of disrupting the momentum of current government efforts for national development. The government is responsible for maintaining the momentum of progress in the country. The government has taken the best possible action to ensure the best situation for the nation and its citizens because undermining political stability can bring about disturbances similar to 1988 events.

Those summoned are being interrogated in accordance with the law; they are not being detained in detention centers, but are being lodged in guest houses under pleasant conditions.

U Thein Sein explained that the SLORC government is engaged in peaceful means to enable emergence of a future democratic state. It is a government committed to a peaceful path. It is well known that the SLORC government has achieved peace with various insurgent groups which remained outside the law engaging in an armed struggle during the previous eras. He said almost all those detained in the past to ensure stablity and prevalence of law and order were released at the appropriate time. The SLORC, which had laid down the national political path to be followed under existing conditions, had always kept the public informed. It convened the National Convention in order to follow this path smoothly and peacefully, and took necessary actions in stages. These are actions aimed at ensuring the peaceful emergence of a democratic state. It could be seen that since the lifting of restrictions on Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, the NLD has responded to such government policy with confrontational acts.

U Thein Sein explained that the government has been tolerant and patient. However, if tolerence continues under present conditions under which some people are being forced back to the path of conflict, the country's peace and stability can be threatened. Confrontation, criticism, and slander can be followed by some people coming out on the streets. If this happens, there can be conflict with the authorities. Later, this can develop into disturbances and unrest. He said that in the interest of the general public, those likely to be involved and used in the path of conflict are being summoned for interrogation temporarily. He said such interrogations had to be held to prevent undesirable events.

The news conference ended at 0935 after members of the Information Committee answered questions from journalists.

Burma: Government Says Detentions 'Only Temporary'

LD2305084596 Melbourne Radio Australia in English 0700 GMT 23 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Burmese Government says its detention of scores of opposition members is only temporary and they are not under arrest. Opposition sources say 110 elected National League for Democracy

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[NLD] members and their supporters have now been detained. More from our correspondent Evan Williams:

[Williams] Top officials and the state press say the opposition members have only been briefly detained to avoid agitation by destabilizing forces. That referred to the meeting of all NLD delegates called by Suu Kyi for Sunday, partly to mark the sixth anniversary of their election. Government officials say the detentions have been carried out to avoid a more severe government crackdown as all are being treated well and will be released. The official press mounts a vigorous attack on Suu Kyi though, saying she is prepared to confront the government and shatter Burma's stability that could return the hellish tragedies of 1988 when thousands died in a failed uprising. While SLORC [State Law and Order Restoration Council] thinks it is being lenient observers here say the arrests have instead enhanced Suu Kyi's image globally. Evan Williams, Rangoon.

[Announcer] Australia's foreign minister, Alexander Downer, has attacked what he describes as the arbitrary and intimidatory actions of Burma's military regime. Mr. Downer says Australia's embassy in Rangoon has been instructed to seek an explanation for the arrest of a large number of members of the National League for Democracy:

[Begin Downer recording] Well, I do regard the developments in Burma as serious. The Australian Government is deeply disturbed about the arrests that have taken place in Burma. What we want to see is the development of a more liberal type of regime in Burma than currently exists. And frankly, Burma is not heading in that direction at this stage. [end recording]

Burma: Article Views Detention of NLD Members

BK2305121596 Rangoon THE NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR in English 23 May 96 p 5

[Article by Minye Kaungbon: "Protected Again in the Nick of Time"]

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] What is of utmost importance today? The most important requirement today is effective and timely prevention of deterioration and disruption of peace and tranquility that has been gradually restored in the country.

It is the principal duty of each and every citizen to decisively stop all possibilities that can immediately disrupt the just restored community peace in the interest of the nation.

The State Law and Order Restoration Council [SLORC] which is providing leadership is the ablest government to secure stability and peace which I am emphasizing to be the most important requirement of the nation.

The essence of what the State Law and Order Restoration Council is striving for is to establish peaceful, prosperous and modern Myanmar [Burma] through peaceful means.

Internal insurgency that broke out when the nation regained independence in 1948 persisted in regions throughout the country especially those in the border areas till 1988. The 1988 disturbances also resulted in the massive offensives against Mong Yang region and similar offensives launched against Methawaw and surrounding areas. Moreover, emergence of some armed groups like ABSDF [All Burma Students' Democratic Front] is also an offshoot of the 1988 disturbances.

Encountering the disruptive and chaotic conditions in the country, the State Law and Order Restoration Council untiringly and steadfastly tried to keep the situation under control and it then carried on striving to secure security of the people fully, prevalence of law and order and maintenance of peace throughout the nation day after day, month after month and year after year. Today, the people are enjoying unprecedented fruits of peace and tranquillity.

Chairman of the State Law and Order Restoration Council Senior General Than Shwe's national reconsolidation policy which is correct, decisive, suitable to prevailing objective conditions, flexible and obviously constructive, made much headway and bore fruits since the beginning of 1996.

The people of Myanmar desire and deserve peace and so does the Tatmadaw [Defense Services] born of the people. Tatmadawmen are the ones who have to experience sufferings in body and mind and risk their lives due to instability and insurgency. Within a short period of two years and eight months from 18 September 1988 to 30 May 1991, 3,266 members of the Tatmadaw sacrificed their lives and 11,210 lost their limbs while fighting the insurgency. Though the Tatmadaw can be proud of having sacrificed lives while defending the citizens and the State, it is most desirous of bringing peace and tranquillity to the nation with the conviction that true victory is gained when the enemy is uprooted.

As the State Law and Order Restoration Council government made efforts for national reconsolidation with goodwill and patience, altogether 16 armed groups with their leaders returned to the legal fold during the period of over six years from 31 March 1989 to 1996 and they are participating in regional security and development projects. [passage omitted]

The Tatmadaw, which can join hands and work together with armed groups with spirit of fraternity, regards all

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organizations including, aboveground political parties as national forces which will join hands and serve the interest of the nation and deals with them with respect. [passage omitted]

Paying priority to stability and peace and tranquillity in the country, the State Law and Order Restoration Council Government has dealt with every matter with sympathy, consideration and leniency. It has been tolerant and patient in handling cases, making major ones into minor and minor ones into complete settlement. So, altogether 23,335 detainees have been released and sent to their homes. Those sentenced to death were later treated leniently.

Included among those with whom the State Law and Order Restoration Council has shown sympathy are U Tin Oo, U Kyi Maung and Daw Suu Kyi of National League for Democracy [NLD].

It is much deplorable that Daw Suu Kyi, who is now busy playing host to many guests after revocation of the restriction order on her on 10 July 1995, is misusing and making capital of the cetana (goodwill) and magnanimity of the State Law and Order Restoration Council. A group of persons of NLD has hatched a plot and is moving about stealthily in a bid to destabilize the country which has achieved stability. They inveigled the Hluttaw [Assembly] representatives elected six years ago out of the National Convention where they were taking part in the discussions in their right course. It is again heard that they are now irrationally designing to carry out a plot, which they should not, in a few days.

Daw Suu Kyi said she wanted dialogue with the State Law and Order Restoration Council. She explicitly revealed her threat on 11 July 1995, "We have to choose between dialogue or utter devastation." She is prepared to confront the Government if it does not comply with her wish. They are about to challenge and shatter the stability and peace of the State in a few days with their preparations to create uproarious opposition under the pretext of observing the anniversary of the elections. It seems that the State Law and Order Restoration Council gave, U Tin Oo, U Kyi Maung and, Daw Suu Kyi their freedom, assuming that they had realized development and progress of the State during the six years from 1988 to 1995 and possessed ideas and thoughts to be able to tread steadily the correct political path in peace.

As the saying goes, "Sesamum [oil seed] does not yield as estimated", that group of persons is irrational, egoistic and power crazy. With the only wish for grabbing power, they believe that the collapse of the present Na Wa Ta [SLORC] Government is their primary aim, regardless of possible instability in the once stable, peaceful country, a situation in which lawless mobs may confront law enforcement personnel, possible bloodshed involving innocent people and downright changeover to an eventual worst condition. In other words, they are strongly craving for such a situation as in 1988 when anarchism reigned and are beginning the seek the old path.

If disturbances come about here and there, causing instability to the nation, due to the leadership of a group of persons craving for power, schools will have to be closed, disrupting education, communications will be difficult or halt, commodity prices will soar, flow of goods will be disrupted, construction of factories and workshops will stop, unemployed persons will increase, looters will be rampant as the saying goes "wild cats jump for joy when the forest is on fire", nation-building endeavours will grind to a halt and the essence is that all the nationals will be plunged into complete trouble.

Our people will be subject to the senselessness and mischief of that lady who is in control of the National League for Democracy, national reconsolidation that has just been restored will be destroyed, and consequently sovereignty will be but in danger.

The scheme and activities of Daw Suu Kyi's group today is designed to sabotage the national interests. The State Law and Order Restoration Council Government is based on the Tatmadaw, which is a systematic, courageous and sacrificing organization in full military alert at all times. Hence, its is well aware of the steps to cause disintegration of the nation and it will certainly take timely preventive measures.

As far as I know, authorities in Yangon [Rangoon] and in the districts have called in some people of the National League for Democracy, who took a confrontational course, for questioning. They have not been arrested. Far from being tortured they are being treated well in dignity and with respect. It is a timely reminder for them before they are misled.

It is proper to prevent fire from breaking out. We cannot afford a fire from trash to spread to a large building. The government and the people shall in no way allow the nation plunge again into hellish tragedies of 1988 after these seven years.

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Brunei, Malaysia & Singapore

Malaysia

Malaysia: Mahathir Pledges 25 Million Ringgit in Bosnian Aid

BK2205124196 Kuala Lumpur Voice of Malaysia in English 0800 GMT 22 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Malaysia has agreed to donate 25 million ringgit to help finance a program to equip and train the Bosnian Army.

Prime Minister Datuk Sri Dr. Mahathir Mohamed announced this to Malaysian newsmen in Washington this morning.

The initiative was made at the request of U.S. President Bill Clinton during their meeting at the White House. Arab countries will also assist in the reconstruction of the Balkan state. Some 100 million ringgit is expected to be collected.

During the meeting Dr. Mahathir also welcomed Clinton's announcement that he would renew China's most favored nation trade privileges and called for continued engagement with Asia's emerging powers.

Malaysia: PRC Agrees To Correct Trade Imbalance

BK2305075196 Kuala Lumpur THE STAR in English 23 May 96

[Unattributed report — received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kuala Lumpur — Malaysia and China have agreed to reduce the current balance of trade which is in Malaysia's favour.

Finance Ministry secretary-general Tan Sri Clifford Herbert said, on Malaysia's part, the Government would increase the import of cement, flour, machinery, and electrical appliances apart from considering more contracts to Chinese firms.

He said the matter was raised during the bilateral meeting between delegations of both countries which were headed by Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Sri Anwar Ibrahim and Chinese vice-premier Zhu Rongji here yesterday.

"By this way, we can correct trade imbalances," he told reporters at a briefing session after attending the meeting.

Malaysia's export to China in mid-1994 was RM [Malaysian ringgit] 2.5 billion while import totalled RM1.6 billion.

Clifford said the Chinese delegation had also explained the reason behind its inability to accept Malaysia's palm oil credit facility, adding that the matter was raised by Anwar.

He said the situation arose following the surplus of vegetable oil in China and not because of the tariff imposed on palm oil import.

Clifford said the Chinese delegation had agreed that from next year China would increase the import of palm oil.

He said Anwar had informed the Chinese delegation that Malaysia would like to see China incorporate its recent change in the tax structure to avoid double taxation.

Earlier in his written statement on his visit to Malaysia, Zhu said China attached great importance to the development of friendly relations and co-operation with Malaysia. "To strengthen and develop China-Malaysia's friendly relations and co-operation are not only in the interest of our two sides, but also . . . to regional peace, stability, and prosperity," he added.

Zhu and his delegation are here on a five-day official visit.

Singapore

Singapore: Double Tax Agreement Signed With Egypt

BK2305075596 Singapore THE STRAITS TIMES in English 23 May 96

[Unattributed report — received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Singapore and Egypt signed a double tax agreement in Cairo yesterday.

The agreement for the avoidance of double taxation and prevention of fiscal evasion with respect to taxes on income was the 35th comprehensive tax treaty Singapore had signed, said a Finance Ministry statement.

The agreement was signed by Foreign Minister S. Jayakumar, who is on a four-day visit to Egypt to boost bilateral ties, and Egyptian Finance Minister Mohei Eldin Elghareeb.

The accord serves to prevent double taxation of income earned in one country by a resident of the other.

It also clarifies the taxing rights between Singapore and Egypt on all forms of income which arise as a consequence of cross-border economic activities between the two countries.

In addition, there are provisions for reduction of tax at source or exemption on certain types of income.

The Finance Ministry statement said these provisions were expected to bring about a greater cross-flow of

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trade, investment, technical know-how and expertise between the two countries.

The agreement will come into force when the instruments of ratification are exchanged.

Details of the agreement will be available after the ratification.

Singapore: Opposition on Ministers' Property Purchases

BK2305071896 Singapore THE STRAITS TIMES in English 23 May 96

[Report by Zuraidah Ibrahim — received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] After two days of debate, both sides of the House — opposition and PAP [People's Action Party] MPs — found themselves in agreement yesterday that there was no impropriety over the property purchases by Senior Minister [SM] Lee Kuan Yew and Deputy Prime Minister [DPM] Lee Hsien Loong.

All 14 PAP and Nominated MPs who spoke said their purchases of the discounted Nassim Jade and Scotts 28 apartments were completely above board, and they had done nothing to besmirch the integrity of the government.

Taking a similar stand, the unofficial leader of the opposition, Mr. Ling How Doong, said: "I'm a practicing lawyer and it's a common practice that discounts are given. Not only in the purchase of property, but in other transactions.

"I say this not because SM and DPM are here.

"I ... am not taking part in the debate because there is no impropriety. There is no necessity to have this matter brought to parliament."

But Mr. Ling did voice a query on their decision to return the discounts, asking: "If there is no impropriety, let alone illegality, why is it necessary for you to return the money? By doing so, it begs more questions than answers."

Mr. Chiam See Tong also raised this point when he spoke on Tuesday [21 May]. But he too made clear he had no doubt that "there was no question of illegality or improper behavior".

Speaking yesterday, Workers' Party [WP] MP Low Thia Khiang did not commit himself to saying whether the purchases were beyond reproach. He expressed concern instead over a growing public view that powerful people received special treatment as a matter of right.

In a speech later, DPM Lee noted that the WP had asked in a press statement for a commission of inquiry, not into his or SM's purchases, but into all discounts Hotel Properties had given.

"Neither has it suggested that we had done anything wrong. In other words, even WP knows that we did nothing wrong, but lacks the political courage and honesty to say so."

The only opposition MP who did not make clear his position was Mr. Cheo Chai Chen. He said on Tuesday that he would "let the people decide," a remark that drew a comment from SM Lee that he was not being up-front.

During the two-day debate, several MPs, who are themselves in the property business, drew on their experience to inform the House that discounts were standard marketing practice used by developers to maximize profits, not win favors.

Former National Development Minister S. Dhanabalan also pointed out on Tuesday that, contrary to public perception, the two Lees had not obtained a bargain, even with their discounts.

Indeed, he revealed that a company associated with the firm he worked for almost bought the Nassim Jade property en bloc, but its offer price of $1,500 per sq. ft. was turned down — while, by contrast, Mr. Lee had paid almost $1,600 per sq. ft.

On a similar note yesterday, Mr. Leong Horn Kee (Thomson GRC [Group Representation Constituency]), who is managing director of Orchard Parade Holdings, said: "Discounts are mere marketing ploys of developers.

"The discounted prices are the real market prices."

"Therefore, no special favors were accorded SM and DPM when discounts were given to them. It is an industry practice."

During the debate — which saw SM and DPM Lee rising to account for their actions several times — members also expressed unease that Mr. Lee's reputation had to be defended.

They said they were certain from the very outset that he could not have done wrong.

Said Dr. Arthur Beng (Bedok GRC): "We do him, and Singapore, a great injustice if we allow any of this unjust talk to continue."

Others, like Mr. Leong, said that while they were saddened at having to see SM and DPM being subjected to public scrutiny, they were also gratified that the system Mr. Lee had created allowed it to probe the integrity of anyone — including Mr. Lee himself.

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Such close examination and the debate in the House, MPs said, demonstrated that the practice of clean government was solidly entrenched.

"This debate was not called because of any law which required it. It was not initiated because of any constitutional requirement," said Mr. Davinder Singh (Toa Payoh GRC).

"SM and DPM voluntarily chose to account for their acts for the reason that there is in Singapore a system of political morality which dictates that the conduct of ministers must always be consistent, not only with the law, but with good conscience."

The prime minister will wrap up the debate today at 3 PM.

Cambodia

Cambodia: Ranariddh Announces King's Intent To Return

BK2305095396 Phnom Penh National Radio of Cambodia Network in Cambodian 0500 GMT 23 May 96

[Speech by Cambodian First Prime Minister Norodom Ranariddh at a seminar marking the third anniversary of the UN-brokered elections in Phnom Penh on 23 May — recorded]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] I would like to stress that the present Royal Government of Cambodia [RGC] respects the Constitution and places itself principally under the laws of the state. The RGC will do its best to have free and fair elections; that is, so there will be no intimidation or violent acts against voters, parties, and party workers. We must organize the 1997 and 1998 elections to the best of our ability [words indistinct] fervent wishes of the Cambodian people who have opted for liberal democracy and pluralism as a political system to govern the state and ensure the rights and freedoms of each citizen.

In order to treasure the glorious unity to which all Cambodians of all tendencies have consented in building our Kingdom of Cambodia — our RGC — I would like to give this seminar my views on the procedure and organization of the coming elections.

There must be an independent commission under the august chairmanship of his majesty our venerated king. This commission will have the duty to control and facilitate the smooth operation of the elections and see to it that the elections proceed successfully and according to existing law. This means the commission must be fully independent and national-minded, because our Constitution stipulates that his majesty the king symbolizes national unity, which is the source of our country's peace and our people's prosperity. The Khmer Royal Armed Forces [KRAF] and all police forces must be placed under the control of this independent commission. There must be control and monitoring by national and international nongovernmental organizations and observers from various countries.

As far the elections are concerned, as the Constitution stipulates, we must all accept and honor the results of the elections to preserve national unity, peace, and happiness throughout the Kingdom of Cambodia. All political parties must sincerely help create the conditions to enable our national elections to proceed impartially, fairly, and correctly. If anyone wishes to set up an opposition party, we will not only welcome him but will support him most sincerely. Moreover, if any individual wishes to set up a party to join in the coalition government, we will welcome him with the greatest pleasure.

I would like to take this excellent opportunity to appeal to the KRAF, the Royal Police, and the Royal Military Police to remain fully neutral and impartial and to take security measures gradually so that the upcoming election campaign will be free, fair, and safe in all aspects.

In making preparations for the upcoming elections, we must be aware that we lack funds and expertise. Therefore, we need to ask our international friends for assistance. This assistance is necessary to enable the major phases of the election preparations such as the campaign, balloting, and announcement of results. We must guarantee that in all these phases no intimidation, coercion, or violent acts take place. The elections must proceed in accordance with the will of the people, who demand social and political stability in the advance toward genuine peace.

I would also like also to condemn publicly the criminals who shot and killed Thon Bunli, director of ODDAMKEAKTE KHMER, on Saturday morning. [applause]

I have ordered the competent authorities to take the necessary measures urgently to unmask the criminals and bring them to court to be punished according to existing law.

We are building a democratic society where law is supreme so our country can become a legal and democratic state. This means that socioeconomic development must go hand in hand with respect for and promotion of human rights and a high sense of responsibility for our duty. A country that respects human rights must

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tolerate all kinds of freedom, including freedom of expression, speech, and the press. Anyone unhappy with any newspaper article is fully entitled to go to court to get legal satisfaction. He has no right to attack, kill, or use violence.

Committing murder violates man's most fundamental right and also runs counter to democratic principles that require that we settle conflicts peacefully. Anyone who instigates violence is as guilty as the perpetrator of the violence. Democracy demands that we recognize other people's opinions, have a good code of morality and living, know what is good and bad, and know about discipline and law. This is an invaluable code of conduct for all of us to follow. We should all grasp the meaning of mercy and tolerance for each other and respect each other's dignity.

We must recall with pride that all Cambodians are the offspring of Angkorian ancestors who are famous for their kind, polite, and industrious character; knowing what is wrong and right, what is bane and boon; never giving up; being firm in their daily discipline; and being compliant and obedient to their parents, teachers, ancestors, and leaders. We used to enjoy a great force of national solidarity in respecting discipline; placing the law above all else; and following most sincerely the instructions of leaders, kings, and the teachings of the Lord Buddha based on nonviolence. For this reason, I appeal most earnestly to all excellencies, madames, gentlemen, ladies, Buddhist monks, nuns, students, and compatriots in all social strata to be merciful, compassionate, and tolerant toward each other. Work together with goodwill, sincerity, respect, and affection for each other. Work with a high sense of patriotism, regardless of political party, to build our new Cambodia jointly so it can become prosperous, glorious, and as strong as in the time of Sangkum Reas Niyum [Popular Socialist Party] of our venerated Samdech Euv, Samdech Ta, and Samdech Ta Tuot [Sihanouk], who is the father of national peace for our Cambodian society in line with the motto: Country; religion; and king, the immortal soul of the Cambodian nation since time immemorial.

Concerning the building of Cambodia, human rights, democracy, and development must go hand in hand in order to advance national development. Therefore, peace and national reconciliation constitute the main factor for the growth and progress of human rights, democracy, and development.

At the same time, I would like to inform you that the RGC has a precise policy for achieving social equity and promoting national development and human dignity. I beg my compatriots to acknowledge one reality that we cannot refute: Today, although our democracy is not yet three years old and all of us are learning as we go, one good thing is that we have cooperated with one another and have sought to learn and understand together, joining hands in the spirit of mutual understanding, mutual respect, and mutual cooperation to bring our national development efforts to fruition. On the basis of the principles of national reconciliation and national union and following the august advice of his majesty our venerated king, we have avoided armed clashes and bloodbaths in the face of major incidents in the past three years. This is extremely admirable and inspires pride. [passage omitted]

Before concluding my speech, I am honored to inform you that this morning I received a personal message from his majesty our venerated king, who asked me to read it to his children and grandchildren.

Before translating this message into Cambodian I would like to read the original message in French as follows: [passage omitted]

To His Royal Highness Samdech Krompreah Norodom Ranariddh, first prime minister of the RGC, Phnom Penh:

Beloved son, I beg you to inform the venerated Buddhist clergy and the beloved Cambodian people of the following:

At a time when our Cambodian nation has once again plunged into an extremely bad situation, particularly in the political field and in some other aspects — I need not give any more detail here as the Cambodian press, the international press, our compatriots and our foreign friends, foreign governments, and international organizations have given abundant details of this situation, and they are highly justified in being very worried about it — I deem that despite my serious health problems, including an upcoming operation on my right eye, afflicted with cataract in its most advanced stage, my duty as king and father of the nation is to return to the country without delay and stay near and amid my beloved brothers, children, and grandchildren.

I have no intention whatsoever of violating our Constitution. I will never allow myself to interfere in the affairs of the RGC or those of our two prime ministers. In my activities and actions in Cambodia and abroad, I strictly adhere to my role of constitutional king who reigns but does not rule. It is and will always be out of the question for me to take power. Amid an adverse situation, however, I have no right to stay abroad, even in a very friendly country. In such a situation, I must be with my children and grandchildren. In a few days,

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when the royal Fokker plane comes to China to transport my wife the queen, I will return to Cambodia on the same plane. [applause]

They can operate on my right eye in Beijing when the situation in our country becomes less worrisome.

I embrace you with all my heart.

Norodom Sihanouk, at 2315 on 22 May 1996. [applause] [passage omitted]

Cambodia: Sihanouk To Delay Operation, To Return To Solve Crisis

BK2305060696 Hong Kong AFP in English 0546 GMT 23 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] PHNOM PENH, May 23 (AFP) — Cambodia's King Norodom Sihanouk has decided to cut short his visit to Beijing to return to his country to help solve a tense political crisis that is threatening the fragile coalition government, first Prime Minister Prince Norodom Ranariddh said Thursday [23 May].

The announcement of the king's early return came as the country celebrated the third anniversary of the 1993 UN-brokered election which brought the coalition — former bitter battlefield enemies — to power.

"He considers that the situation is serious enough for him to come back," Prince Ranariddh said after opening a seminar that will look at ways to ensure the country's next elections are free and fair.

"At this moment when our country has plunged one more time into an extremely bad situation ... my duty, as king and as father of the nation, is to return without delay and stay (with) my beloved people," the king said in a letter faxed late Wednesday to the prince from Beijing.

The king added he had no intention of trying to assume power or interfering in the work of the government but said "in an unfortunate situation, I do not have the right to stay abroad."

The prince, one of 73-year-old King Sihanouk's five surviving sons, said his father thought he could be a calming influence and had decided to postpone a serious cataract operation until after the situation in Phnom Penh stabilized.

"His presence alone is enough to calm down everbody," Prince Ranariddh said. "His moral authority is enough."

The prince said he would travel to Beijing on Tuesday and return with the monarch the next day. The king has been out of Cambodia since April 18 when he left for a state visit to France and was not expected to return for several months.

The shaky coalition in Phnom Penh has been wracked with tension since March when the prince's royalist FUNCINPEC [National United Front for an Indepedent, Neutral, Peaceful and Cooperative Cambodia] party threatened to withdraw from government if its major ally, the formerly communist Cambodian People's Party (CPP), refused to fully share power.

CPP leader and co-Premier Hun Sen then threatened to quell any attempt to dissolve the government with military force.

The tension was compounded by the absence of the prince who had gone to meet his father at the end of the king's state visit to France.

The prince returned earlier this month promising the resolve the crisis, but tension escalated again on Saturday when a prominent opposition newspaper editor, Thun Bunli, was gunned down on a busy street in the capital.

Thun Bunli's Wednesday funeral procession, led by the leader of the banned opposition Khmer Nation Party (KNP) Sam Rangsi, was temporarily blocked by hundreds of riot police and armed soldiers.

The prince said he believed the king's decision may have been influenced by Thun Bunli's murder and admitted that he had told his father Wednesday that "the people were waiting for him."

Though the king is highly respected by a large segment of the population and wields enormous influence, several officials wondered aloud whether his presence would make a great deal of difference.

"If he has a plan on how to end this crisis, then it is a good thing," said one FUNCINPEC member of parliament. "But if he doesn't, then I think it would be better for him to stay abroad."

Rumors have run rampant that King Sihanouk was delaying his return because he feared for his life, speculation that the king earlier this week discarded as nonsense.

Acting Head of State Chea Sim, the president of the National Assembly, had been scheduled to visit the king in Beijing on Friday in an effort to convince him to return to the country.

It was unclear whether that trip would go ahead in light of the king's decision.

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Cambodia: Chea Sim Scheduled To Meet Sihanouk in Beijing on 24 May

BK2205123796 Phnom Penh National Radio of Cambodia Network in Cambodian 1100 GMT 22 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] A high-ranking government official said that Samdech Chea Sim, chairman of the Cambodian People's Party, will go to Beijing on Friday 24 May 1996 to meet with His Majesty King Norodom Sihanouk.

According to His Excellency [H.E.] Li Thuch, adviser of the prince krompreah first prime minister and head of the prince first prime minister's office, Samdech Chea Sim, acting head of state in the king's absence, requested this meeting and the king consented to it.

On this trip to Beijing Samdech Chea Sim will also enquire about the king's health and report to the king on the political situation in the country. H.E. Li Thuch further said that this is a normal procedure. He further said that Samdech Chea Sim will meet the king on Friday [24 May] afternoon and return to Cambodia on Saturday 25 June.

Cambodia: Paper Holds Hun Sen Responsible for Editor's Murder

BK2305114396 Phnom Penh SAPORDARMEAN NEAK PRAYUT in Cambodian 20-21 May 96 pp 1, 4

["Today's Comment" column by Miss Chhavi: "Is This Their Way to Indict Journalists?"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Journalists have no weapon except for a pen to use in expressing their opinion and constructive criticism for social progress. This kind of a weapon has never killed anyone. Why then have they used lethal weapons—guns—to fight the pen?

Non Chan, former editor of the SAMLENG YUVEAK-CHON KHMER newspaper, who only used his pen to criticize corrupt elements and drug traffickers, was gunned down in broad daylight on a crowded street in Phnom Penh.

Ek Mongkol, also a journalist who only made comments over radio, was also shot and wounded in broad daylight.

What is more deplorable is that on 18 May, after strongly criticizing second Prime Minister Hun Sen's wife, ODDAMKEAKTE KHMER Editor Thun Bunli was barbarously shot and killed by an unknown assassin again on a street in Phnom Penh.

The roadside killing of journalists is a very barbarous act in the world. During their era, the Pol Pot elements—although they killed people—never killed anyone on such a crowded street. They at least chose a quiet place far from the people's eyes when killing someone.

Obviously, no other regime is more barbarous than the current second Kingdom of Cambodia regime under Hun Sen's leadership. If the current Hun Sen regime really respected the law, it would not have indicted any journalist on a street side like this. It should instead have sent those persons it regarded as suspects to court. This act further attests to Hun Sen's cruel and barbarous nature. This is because the state of a society also serves as an indicator of the true nature of its leaders.

Therefore, we would like our Cambodian people to be well aware of Hun Sen's true nature. Otherwise, our nation and race will definitely face the same fate as Thun Bunli. At present, all Hun Sen wants is power. He does not care about anything else except for selling out the nation and killing his fellow countrymen. Hun Sen does not hesitate to take revenge against the journalists who have only pens and pencils. For example, Hun Sen even supported the ransacking of the SEREIPHEAP THMEI office.

Therefore, we call on the national and international public, especially those who cherish justice, to judge Hun Sen's activities. Does Hun Sen want Cambodia to have democracy? Does Hun Sen want freedom to be promoted in Cambodia?

Thailand

Thailand: Paper Views Chinese Military Grant Offer

BK2205113696 Bangkok MATICHON SUT SAPDA in Thai 21 May 96 pp 32, 33

[Commentary by Surachat Bamrungsuk: "Thailand and China — The Security Angle"]

[FBIS Translated Text] A report by a foreign news agency on 18 April said that China has offered $3 million in military assistance to Thailand. The offer was made by Zhang Wannian, vice-chairman of the CPC Central Military Commission, during his call on Thai Defense Minister General Chawalit Yongchaiyut while he was a visit to Thailand. Zhang also visited Cambodia, Singapore, and Burma during his tour of Asia.

Zhang's trip to Thailand could be termed a visit to reciprocate the visit by Prime Minister Banhan Sinlapa-acha, but perhaps it was aimed at conveying thanks to Banhan for his public announcement of Thailand's "One China" policy during the crisis in the Taiwan Strait.

The international political circle has become skeptical of the motive of the Chinese military aid offer to Thailand

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and wonders how the Thai armed forces will make use of it.

Chinese Weapons in the Thai Armed Forces

The Chinese military aid to Thailand is not a new phenomena. China sold arms to Thailand at friendly prices during the period that Vietnam occupied Cambodia. The size of Chinese military aid was considerable, particularly to the Thai Army, including 50 tanks, 450 armored personnel carriers, 15 artillery pieces, and 122 antiaircraft guns. The Thai Navy commissioned four Chinese built frigates.

It was common knowledge that the quality of the Chinese arms was inferior to Western ones, especially to U.S. weapons in use in the Thai military services. However, Thailand felt that the Vietnamese threat was serious enough to warrant acquisition of more weapons. The Thai military felt that tanks were needed to cope with a possible armored battle with Vietnam. Western tanks, however, were too expensive. Therefore, the Thai military solved the dilemma by acquiring Chinese arms, despite their questionable quality, to boost its readiness.

Objectives of the Chinese Military Aid

After the end of the civil war in Cambodia and the withdrawal of Vietnamese forces from that country, the Chinese arms that Thailand acquired to boost its firepower on the eastern border began to experience problems. The acquisition of spare parts for these Chinese weapons was not easy, causing these weapons to pose considerable a maintenance problem for the Thai armed forces.

Therefore, it is very possible that the latest Chinese military aid offer is aimed at soothing the feelings of the Thai military and convincing it that, as the provider of the problem weapons, China has not ignored the matter. Moreover, Gen. Chawalit has shed more light on the issue by noting that part of the aid will be used to buy ammunition for the Chinese arms now in use in the Thai armed forces.

On China's part, it hopes that the Thai armed forces' use of Chinese arms will serve to popularize them in other markets in Southeast Asia. China now wants to make itself a main player in the arms markets in the region. The arms sales by China to the region during 1991-93 totaled some $875 million, second only to the United States. During the period, the Chinese arms sale to Burma totaled $525 million, $320 million to Thailand, and $30 million to Laos.

Repercussions

Due to the apprehensions that ASEAN countries and Western powers like the United States have toward China, particularly with the Chinese conduct during the recent Taiwan strait crisis, which appears to have increased the apprehensions, Thailand will draw close scrutiny from those countries if it accepts the Chinese military grant. The size of the Chinese grant is very small when compared with the 1996 Thai military budget of 100.6 billion baht. This budget will increase to 100.8 billion baht in 1997. Therefore, the Chinese military grant offer can be viewed from two angles. First, since the amount of $3 million is insignificant when compared with the size of the Thai defense budget, there is no reason to accept the grant, because acceptance will demonstrate too close an attachment to China. From a second angle, although the grant is not that big, it can be put to beneficial use by the Thai armed forces.

Conclusion

It is a fact that China is the superpower of this region, and China will continue to occupy a major place in Thailand's foreign and security policies. There is no question that Thailand's security depends on it setting a correct distance in its policy between it and China. Proper relations between small and big countries have to do with setting a proper distance. To put this into practice is the challenge facing Thai policy makers and practitioners.

Thailand: Spokesman Says Rangoon Arrests Detrimental to Democracy

BK2305032696 Bangkok THAILAND TIMES in English 23 May 96 p A2

[Unattributed Report]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Bangkok — The Thai Foreign Affairs Ministry yesterday expressed concern over the recent arrests of 87 key followers of Burmese dissident leader Aung San Suu Kyi by the military junta.

Ministry spokesman Suraphong Chaiyanam yesterday said such an aggressive action on the part of the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC) is detrimental to Burma's democratic development.

"Instead of reaching a compromise, the arrests will only further the rift between the country's current military leadership and opposition groups," he said referring to Thailand's policy of constructive engagement towards Burma. "All changes in Burma must be done through a democratic process in which opinions of various concerned groups are taken into consideration."

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The SLORC since Tuesday has arrested around 87 key figures of the National League of Democracy (NLD) which is headed by pro-democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi. The lady, as she is popularly called, has been released from house arrest in July last year.

Earlier, a high-ranking SLORC official has given out a warning to Burma's dissident groups saying that Suu Kyi was like a poisonous snake and it was time to keep her in a basket.

"Thailand wants to see the democratic process and national reconciliation being restored in Burma," Suraphong said pointing out that these will bring stability and progress to the nation.

"Unless these two elements are being instituted, stability and peace will never happened in Burma," said Suraphong emphasizing that Thailand has placed a grave concern over the issue.

"The SLORC's action of arresting members of the opposition will not wipe out the problem, worse yet, it will aggravate the already tense situation," he said.

Asked about the US spokesman's earlier calls on ASEAN countries to act in response to the incident, Suraphong said, the parties have to come up with a consensus on the issue.

"If all parties concerned agree that the issue is of utmost importance, then, we may be able to discuss the dispute," he said adding that the incident will not jeopardize Burma's status as an observer of the Association of Southeast Asian Nation (ASEAN).

Suraphong said ASEAN does not base its decision to grant any country an observer or member status on the type of administration it has, but rather by the strength of its economic cooperation with ASEAN countries.

He insisted that the incident will not affect Burma's application to become a full ASEAN member in the next few years.

Thailand: Burmese Students Rally Against Detention of NLD Members

BK2305080096 Hong Kong AFP in English 0758 GMT 23 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Bangkok, May 23 (AFP) — Twenty-two Burmese students staged a peaceful rally outside the Burmese embassy here Thursday [23 May] against the detentions of members of the National League for Democracy (NLD) in Burma.

The students demanded the immediate release of NLD members and a halt to all illegal arrests. They urged the junta to hold a dialogue with opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi for progress towards democracy in Burma.

"We denounce the illegal arrest of NLD representatives and demand SLORC to release all NLD members and stop the arrests," Aung Myo Min, representative of All Burmese Student's Democratic Front (ABSDF), told AFP.

Some 110 NLD members are believed to have been detained so far by burma's military authorities.

Both plainclothes and uniformed Thai police were present but did not intervene.

Meanwhile, the Bangkok-based Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (Forum Asia) asked Burma to unconditionally release all those detained and to guarantee their physical and psychological safety.

A Forum Asia statement called on the Burmese junta to engage in an immediate dialogue with opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi.

Thailand: Daily Criticizes Rangoon for Arresting Politicians

BK2305050496 Bangkok THE NATION in English 23 May 96 p A4

[Editorial: "SLORC Has Plunged Burma Into Darkness]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] There is an ongoing anti-opposition crackdown in Burma and over 80 National League for Democracy (NLD) politicians have been arrested around the country. Opposition officials say more arrests are being conducted by the hour as the State Law and Order Restoration Council (Slorc) tries to stop the first meeting of elected NLD representatives in years, which is scheduled to take place during the sixth anniversary of the 1990 general election that falls on Sunday.

The will of the Burmese people was obviously expressed in 1990 wherein the NLD won a landslide victory. The Slorc, however, disregarded the result. To prevent the transfer of power to the duly-elected government, it convened a so-called National Convention to frame a state constitution based on principles guaranteeing the perpetuation of military dictatorship in Burma.

Sunday's meeting will see more than 400 NLD representatives gathered in Rangoon — the biggest gathering since they were elected and the most provocative opposition act since Aung San Suu Kyi was released 10 months ago from house arrest.

Speaking to Radio Australia's Bangkok correspondent from Suu Kyi's Rangoon compound, her chief spokesman U Win Htein, before he was arrested yesterday, confirmed that at least 87 NLD representatives and

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two wives of members had been detained or placed under house arrest. Others are now under constant surveillance. Win Htein said no one had been charged, but added that it was the biggest crackdown in years and was aimed at preventing delegates from attending the meeting.

The will of the NLD has certainly not been broken and the crackdown, in fact, has given them further resolve to carry on fighting for justice, human rights and democracy.

"We've told everyone who have still not been arrested to come to Rangoon for the meeting. The arrests just show that the junta is not confident enough to let a few hundred people hold a meeting. It just indicates that they (the Slorc) are so nervous," Win Htein said.

The NLD meeting, it seems, is supposed to include for the first time, as observers, leaders of Burma's powerful ethnic groups who also aim to forge future political plans as the country's elected representatives. That, in fact, is a slap on the face to Slorc, which wants to enshrine itself as a perpetual political power through the manipulated new constitution.

Sunday's NLD meeting is an intolerable state of affairs for the junta and in the past few days the Slorc generals have railed against the pro-democracy opposition leaders, calling them "snakes" and accusing them of "threatening political stability" — ridiculous language often used to justify a crackdown.

Strong international pressure is now needed to break the current political stalemate in Burma. The Slorc must be forced to enter into a dialogue with Suu Kyi's NLD in order to chart the country's future for the will of the Burmese people in 1990 has been completely disregarded. In reality, those elected during the May 1990 election are the official representatives of Burma, who have the legal rights to form a People's Assembly.

Let us not forget that there is a UN General Assembly resolution calling for the restoration of democracy in Burma in line with the will of the people as expressed in the May 1990 election, and for the respect of human rights there. The international community is now bound by this commitment and must take firm steps to ensure that the military junta recognizes the results of the 1990 election.

Also, they must call for the unconditional release of all those who had been arrested in the past few days because, as Amnesty International has clearly stated, those NLD members detained may face torture and ill-treatment in custody.

The United States has already lodged strong protests to the military junta, expressing strong concern over the fate of the pro-democracy activists. Other countries too should follow Washington's example because the Slorc butchers should be condemned for their actions.

The Slorc has reneged on promises made to the international community and the arrests of the NLD members has set things backward in the country.

Asean, being the immediate neighbour of Burma, must realise this. Unless and until the Slorc releases all those arrested over the past few days, as well as all political prisoners, Asean has no business coddling these monsters in army uniforms. For Burma to be welcomed into the regional grouping now is a blow to all freedom-loving people in Southeast Asia.

Thailand: Banhan Receives Resignation Letters From Five Ministers

BK2305084596 Bangkok Cho So 100 Radio in Thai 0805 GMT 23 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] After receiving the resignation letters from five ministers from Group 16, a faction in the ruling Chat Thai Party, Prime Minister Banhan Sinlapa-acha told reporters at Government House that these ministers have demonstrated their sense of political responsibility and opened the way for him to reshuffle the cabinet.

Asked whether or not the five ministers will be reappointed to serve in any ministerial posts, the prime minister said he could not give any answer at that moment.

He said: [Begin recording] [Banhan] They give me, the prime minister, the opportunity to reshuffle the cabinet with ease.

[Unidentified reporter] Will they have a chance to come back?

[Banhan] I cannot say. We will have to wait and see. [End recording]

The prime minister reaffirmed that his government is still stable and still comprises the seven parties because the new line-up to be set up after 24 May will involve only some individual ministers.

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Australia

Australia: Deputy Premier Warns Rangoon Over Arrest of Opposition

BK2305064696 Melbourne Radio Australia in English 0500 GMT 23 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Australia's deputy prime minister, Tim Fischer, has issued a warning to Burma's military regime over the arrests of the opposition activists. Mr. Fischer says if the State Law and Order Restoration Council [SLORC] goes ahead with its savage crackdown it will jeopardize Burma's efforts to boost tourism.

[Begin Fischer recording] There is signal to encourage international tourists to come to Burma or Myanmar. It will become politically and totally unacceptable to travel to Burma this year if there is a brutal savage crack down on Aung San Suu Kyi and the NLD [National League for Democracy]. [end recording]

Australia: Foreign Minister 'Disturbed' by Rangoon Arrests

BK2305082496 Hong Kong AFP in English 0703 GMT 23 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] CANBERRA, May 23 (AFP) — Australia's government is "disturbed" by the arrest of pro-independence activists in Burma but still supports admitting the country into a regional security forum, Foreign Minister Alexander Downer said Thursday [23 May].

"We're disturbed at the arrests that have taken place in Burma. We want to see a more liberal type of regime in Burma than currently exists, and frankly Burma is not heading in that direction at this stage," Downer told reporters.

"For there to be a peaceful settlement in Burma, there has to be a resumption of dialogue between Aung San Suu Kyi and the democratic forces in Burma and the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC).

"Without a resumption of dialogue, the country is just going to remain inherently unstable."

Downer said Australia's policy towards Burma was designed to promote human rights.

But he said Australia would not reverse its policy on Burma's inclusion in the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF).

A spokesman for the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade said the ARF decided to admit India and Burma at a recent meeting, although a general caution about further expansion was noted.

He said the ARF decided on issues by consensus, not by majority vote, so any reconsideration of the decision to admit Burma would require another meeting and a new consensus.

More than 100 people have been taken into custody in nationwide roundup begun Monday, with more arrests were expected. SLORC's crackdown came ahead of a planned meeting of pro-democracy activists Thursday, the largest in years.

Aung San Suu Kyi said Wednesday it was "quite possible" she could be arrested again, after SLORC, the military junta she has been fighting for years, jailed scores of her supporters.

The Nobel Peace Prize laureate was freed last July after six years of house arrest.

Australia: Downer Views 'Serious' Developments in Burma

BK2305102896 (Internet) Australian Broadcasting Corporation Online WWW in English 0625 GMT 23 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Australia's attacked the tactics of Burma's military regime, which it's described as arbitrary and intimidatory.

Foreign Minister Alexander Downer has instructed Australia's embassy in Rangoon to ask the Burmese regime why a number of members of the National League for Democracy have been arrested.

Mr Downer says the developments in Burma are serious, and have deeply disturbed the Australian government.

He says Australia would like to see a more liberal regime develop in Burma.

But the Foreign Minister says Burma's not heading in that direction at this stage.

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